The Marvelous Primordial State

The Mejung Tantra

A Fundamental Scripture of Dzogchen Semde

Translated from Tibetan by
Elio Guarisco, Adriano Clemente, and Jim Valby
With the Precious Help of
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Introduced and Annotated by
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Shang Shung Publications

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Epigraph

“Mahasattva!
Everything has originated from you.
Mahasattva!
This is the marvelous secret of all buddhas.”

The Marvelous Primordial State

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Foreword
by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The Marvelous Primordial State of Total Perfection (rDzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba) is a profoundly important root text of the Mind series of Dzogchen. Several texts known by the title *rMad du byung ba* are contained in the various editions of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition (rNying ma rgyud 'bum).* These are:

The Marvelous Primordial State (*Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba*), in forty chapters;
The Tantra of the Marvelous Primordial State (Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i rgyud), in eleven chapters;
The Section of the Marvelous Primordial State, Total Bliss (bDe ba chen po byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i le'u), in forty chapters;
The Golden Vine: [Extract] from the Tantra Called the Wheel of Self-Originating Bliss, The Essential Meaning of the Marvelous Total Perfection (rDzogs pa chen po rmad byung don gyi snying po rang byung bde ba'i 'khor lo'i rgyud las gser kyi khril shing can), in twenty chapters.

An annotation to the last text clearly states: "It was translated by Vimala and Nyag Jnanakumara. Taught to Nyang Tingdzin Zangpo, who then hid it as a *terma*, it was [later] discovered and transmitted by Trom Yeshe Nyingpo."

Among these various texts called *The Marvelous* (*rMad byung*), the ancient Ati Dzogchen text widely known as *The Marvelous* is certainly *The Marvelous Primordial State* (*Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba)* in forty chapters. This is evident because all citations quoted from the *rMad byung* by ancient scholars and accomplished masters of Ati Dzogchen come uniquely from this text.

In particular, in recent times the eight-volume collection known as *Collected Tantras of Vairocana* (*Bai ro rgyud 'bum)* was discovered in the library of Togden Rinpoche in Ladakh. The first seven volumes from Ka to Ja were found to exclusively contain ancient Dzogchen manuscripts written in the headed letter or *dbu can* script. This collection was published in eight volumes by the Ladakhi

Tashigangpa at Leh, Ladakh, in 1971, and it was then that we first came to know of the existence of these ancient manuscripts.

The second volume of that collection contains the ancient manuscript, *The Marvelous Primordial State* (*Byang chub sems rmad du byung ba*) from pages 105 (f. 1a1) to 171 (f. 34a3), and in that text the title reads: *Don mchog 'di yang thun mong min rmad byung bzhugs so.* The beginning of the actual text states:

> In the Indian language, *Bodhicitta Saubhashika*.[1]
> In the Tibetan language, *Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba*.
> This is part of the teaching on the Marvelous Primordial State.
> Homage to the Teacher Shri Vajrasattva,
> Glory of all glories!

The text continues, concluding with: *Don mchog 'di yang thun mong min rmad du byung ba rdzogs so*. It has thirty-nine chapters, or forty if the closing chapter is included. Following this text, on page 171 of volume Kha (f. 34a3), we find:

> . . .
> In Tibetan, *rDzogs pa chen po rmad byung don gyi snying po/ rang byung bde ba'i 'khor lo'i rgyud ces bya ba*.
> Homage to the Bhagavan,
> The Glorious King of Self-Originated Pure Awareness, Endowed with the Body (*kaya*) of Wisdom. . .

and so on, until a note at the conclusion of the twentieth chapter, page 202 (f. 49b6), states:

> So ends *The Golden Vine, [Extract] from the Wheel of Self-Originating Bliss, the Essential Meaning of the Marvelous Total Perfection* (*rDzogs pa chen po rmad du byung don gyi snying po/ rang byung bde ba'i 'khor lo'i rgyud las/ gser gyi khril shing can zhes bya ba rdzogs so*), translated and revised and thus finalized by the Indian scholar Vimalamitra and the Tibetan translator Nyag Jnanakumara.

A note to the colophon at the end of the text reads:

> It was taught to Nyang Tingdzin Zangpo, who then placed it in a *terma* along with its secret instructions, entrusted it to Mahakala, Dorje Legpa, and Ekajati, the One with a Single Vajra Eye, and hid it in the cliff at Zong cave in Uru. It was [later] discovered by Trom Yeshe Nyingpo, who taught it to his son, Wangchug Gyatso. He [in turn] entrusted it to his son, Yeshe Senge. He entrusted it to Dogtön Öbar.

> He entrusted it to Rongpa Nubchungwa and to Nyangben Rinchen Tsugtor.

Moreover, an additional annotation states:

> It is said that about one hundred folios that were present in the original manuscript of the tantra between the first and last [folios] are missing.

Apart from these two texts, this old *Collected Tantras of Vairocana* contains no other ancient text with the title *The Marvelous Total Perfection of Ati* (*A ti rdzogs chen rmad du byung ba*). For these reasons, we can understand that the most important root text of the *rMad byung* or *Marvelous Tantra* is the extant one called *The Marvelous Primordial Stat*e (*Byang chub sems rmad du byung ba*) in forty chapters.

Although this ancient text is not as large, nor has it as many chapters as *The All-Creating King* (*Kun byed rgyal po'i rgyud*), it teaches all the essential principles of Ati Dzogchen that can be subsumed in the view without fixations, contemplation beyond concepts, and the fruit that is not obtained by treading a path. Therefore, this ancient manuscript of *The Marvelous Primordial State* contains the essence of all sutras and tantras of the Buddha's teaching, with nothing missing.

Three of my students, the *lotsavas* (translators) Adriano Clemente, Elio Guarisco, and Jim Valby, who have a familiarity with the view, meditation, and behavior of Dzogpa Chenpo, and who in particular have gained a good understanding of the grammar of the ancient Dzogchen texts and of the system of Tibetan language, surmounting difficulties for several years, translated this ancient text into English.

During this process, the translators and I have compared the various existing editions of the text again and again, and through persistent examination we have determined as best we could the intended meaning of this Ati scripture. However, both because of the ancient language in the various editions of the text and because the meaning of some points could not always be clearly discerned, some of our doubts still remain. In any case, if, despite our pure intention in realizing the English translation of this text, we have made mistakes, either by not understanding the intended meaning or by misconstruing it, we sincerely ask the masters and the guardians of the teaching for forbearance.

Our English translation and publication of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, an ancient and extraordinary text the like of which is rarely found in the world

and whose value is immeasurable, have been made for the benefit of those fortunate ones who wish to gain an understanding of the real meaning of Ati Dzogpa Chenpo. I truly hope and wish that it will serve to open the doors of their minds and engender a genuine understanding of the principle of Ati Dzogpa Chenpo.

With my best wishes,
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Merigar West, *mewa* year 3926,
the fourteenth day of the seventh month
of the female Earth Ox year,
September 3, 2009

Translator's Preface

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU, having studied *The Marvelous Primordial State* in depth several times and emphasized its great importance as a root text of the Dzogchen Mind series, in 2004 suggested that I use *The Marvelous Primordial State* as the textbook for a translators' training course organized by the Shang Shung Institute of Austria. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu then asked me, Adriano Clemente, and Jim Valby to undertake the translation of this text, which we proceeded to do within the framework of the Ka-Ter Translation Project, a branch of the International Shang Shung Institute of Tibetan Studies.

What began as a consultation on an obscure manuscript whose translation seemed an impossible task slowly took shape in our minds as a coherent body of explanations, enabling us to accomplish a final version of this extraordinary text. The first rough draft of the English translation was prepared by myself and later revised in collaboration with Jim Valby in the United States. The translation was subsequently revised on several occasions in collaboration with Adriano Clemente, and the final version was prepared by Adriano Clemente and myself.

An archer can shoot an arrow to the distance that his strength allows. Likewise, we have produced a translation to the best of our capacities, although unclear points may still remain or we may have made mistakes in translation. For these we apologize and ask attentive readers to point them out.

The work of translation proved extremely difficult, since the cryptic meaning of several parts of the text was not easy to comprehend. For this reason, on at least three occasions at different stages of the translation, we sought the help of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who kindly and patiently sat with us for many hours in order to clarify certain points of the text. The support of his knowledge and blessing unveiled much that was not obvious to us in this wonderful scripture.

I also wish to express my thanks to a small group of people without whose collaboration the accomplishment of our aim would have been much hindered: Oliver Leick, manager of the Ka-Ter Translation Project since its inception in 2002, whose unstinting dedication resulted in the finding of necessary financial support; the Tibetologist Giuseppe Baroetto, who generously offered his interpretation of many obscure passages in helpful exchanges with me; and our two editors, Nancy Simmons, English editor of the Ka-Ter Translation Project,

and Judith Chasnoff, a proficient editor of Buddhist works, who did the much appreciated editing of this book.

The Marvelous Primordial State represents a teaching that can be considered the summit of all spiritual ways, Buddhist and non-Buddhist. Its aim is to lead the individual beyond all limitations and concepts of any particular tradition, religion, philosophy, or belief system into the ultimate and ineffable realm of our true nature, the enlightenment that has always been ours.

With this in mind, we have translated *The Mejung Tantra* in the hope that the Dzogchen teaching may become known throughout the world so that all beings can awaken to their primordial state as embodied in the living example of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Elio Guarisco
Como, August 2012

Introduction

The Origin of Dzogchen

According to tradition, the Dzogchen tantras[1] were taught from time immemorial in our world and in other worlds.[2] The spiritual teaching of Dzogchen was first diffused in our universe by twelve primordial teachers. The first master, known as Youth of Sublime Light, spread the teachings in the realm called Abundant Delight when the lifespan lasted an incalculable number of years. The twelfth master, Shakyamuni, spread the teachings on the Indian subcontinent when the lifespan lasted one hundred years. The first of the seven primordial teachers said to have appeared and to have taught on our earth was the one called Wise Wrathful King; the seventh and last was Shakyamuni.

With the passage of time, the Dzogchen tantras disappeared, and what remained were highly concentrated, formulaic, orally transmitted instructions known in Tibetan as *nyengyü*. Only with the appearance of Garab Dorje did the Dzogchen tantras known to us today come to light.

There is a story that Adhicitta, the son of the deva Bhadrapala who resided in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three Gods,[3] had four prophetic dreams. Just as these dreams had indicated, Vajrapani[4] bestowed the empowerment and transmitted secret instructions to Adhicitta. Thus the Dzogchen teaching spread in the realm of the gods. Later, in Oddiyana in western India,[5] one day Praharani, daughter of King Uparaja, also known as Dharma Ashva, was bathing by the shore of a lake when a golden swan, a magical emanation of Vajrapani, dissolved the mind of Adhicitta in a luminous letter *Hum* and swallowed it. The swan touched the breast of the princess three times with his beak, and the luminous *Hum* was absorbed in her heart. At the completion of her pregnancy, from the heart of the princess emerged a nine-pronged, luminous golden *vajra*. The *vajra* dissolved into light, and from that light came forth a child adorned with the major and minor signs of a great being. Holding symbols and reciting the tantra of the *Total Space of Vajrasattva*,[6] that child, it is believed, was the emanation or *nirmanakaya* of Garab Dorje. Vajrasattva came to Garab Dorje and empowered him as the holder of the treasure of the Dzogchen teaching. This is one of the stories recounting the birth of Garab Dorje.[7]

It is widely agreed that Garab Dorje appeared in the country of Oddiyana in the second century BCE, 360 years after the passing of Buddha Shakyamuni.[8] Because he proclaimed the Dzogchen tantras that had been taught from the remotest time but had disappeared, and upon the directive of Vajrasattva, wrote them down with the assistance of the *dakinis*, Garab Dorje has a unique importance in the transmission of this teaching in our world.

Some traditional accounts state that the first disciple of Garab Dorje was Manjushrimitra, a Yogacara[9] scholar from the Buddhist university of Nalanda. Historically, however, unless the birth of Garab Dorje is placed much later—well into the following centuries—Garab Dorje's disciple Manjushrimitra could not have been a scholar from Nalanda, as its founding was in the fifth century CE. Moreover, Taranatha's *History of Buddhism in India*,[10] a landmark in the annals of authoritative histories of Tibetan authorship, makes no mention of a scholar from Nalanda known by that name.

Who, then, is the Manjushrimitra who was Garab Dorje's disciple? Some[11] consider this Manjushrimitra to be the old monk who was the tantric master of Buddhajnanapada,[12] the forefather of the Jnanapada school of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. In *The Blue Annals*,[13] however, Gö Lotsava, after recounting the meeting of Buddhajnanapada with the old monk, states simply that the seers considered this monk to be a rebirth of Manjushrimitra.

Moreover, we know from Taranatha's *History of Buddhism in India* that Buddhajnanapada, who was also a master of Padmasambhava,[14] lived in the eighth century and was a contemporary of King Trisong Detsen, who reigned from 755-797.

To further complicate matters, the lineages of the Vast Space (*klong sde*) and Upadesha (*man ngag sde*) or Secret Instruction series of Dzogchen relate that Manjushrimitra was the teacher of Shri Simha [15] who in turn, in the eighth century, taught Vimalamitra[16] and the Tibetan translator Vairocana (late eighth to early ninth century).[17] This would place Manjushrimitra in or close to the eighth century, and could possibly substantiate the claim that he was the same Manjushrimitra who taught Buddhajnanapada.

One possible cause of the mystery of the identity of Garab Dorje's student Manjushrimitra is that he was originally known by another name, that of Nyingpo Drubpa. In fact, the name Manjushrimitra was conferred on him by Garab Dorje when he bestowed the empowerment and transmission of the Dzogchen teaching. Thus, he was probably not known in India by the name

Manjushrimitra.

In conclusion, if we uphold the validity of the birth date of Garab Dorje given above, it would make sense to assume the existence of two Manjushrimitras: one a disciple of Garab Dorje and another the master of Buddhajnanapada. In fact, two Manjushrimitras are mentioned in the lineage of the Mind series of Dzogchen (*sems sde*): the first the disciple of Garab Dorje and the second who lived much later. In the course of time the two—as is not uncommon in Indian historiography—became identified as one and the same person, and thus eventually some in the tradition came to consider the two Manjushrimitras as having the same mindstream.[18]

Whatever the case may be, according to one history, when Garab Dorje was living in a cave in a charnel ground in Oddiyana, Manjushrimitra received a prophecy from Manjushri foretelling that if he wished to achieve enlightenment in one life, he should go to Oddiyana and meet Garab Dorje. Manjushrimitra, accompanied by six scholars, went to Oddiyana. While the other scholars' sole intention was to challenge the teaching beyond cause and effect proclaimed by Garab Dorje, Manjushrimitra secretly wished to receive this teaching. Upon meeting the master and receiving a symbolic transmission, Manjushrimitra completely and instantly understood the nature of reality. Some sources claim that in order to receive the complete transmission of the Dzogchen tantras, he remained with Garab Dorje for seventy-five years. At the end, when Garab Dorje passed into a dimension of light, he bestowed on Manjushrimitra a three-line testament, entrusting him with the legacy of his message.

The empowering testament was eventually transmitted to Shri Simha, then to Jnanasutra, to Vimalamitra, and to a direct disciple of Shri Simha, the great master Padmasambhava, who on beholding the wisdom body of Garab Dorje attained the realization of the great transference.[19] The lineage of the Dzogchen Mind series descended from Manjushrimitra through various masters to Shri Simha, and then to Vairocana, who introduced it in Tibet, with the exception of the thirteen scriptures transmitted by Vimalamitra to Vairocana and translated later. The Vast Space series went from Shri Simha to Vairocana, while the Secret Instruction series containing the cycle of the Nyingthig *(snying thig)* or Heart Essence was introduced in Tibet by Padmasambhava, and later also by Vimalamitra.

From Manjushrimitra until Shri Simha, the lineage of the Dzogchen Mind series includes over twenty-five teachers, continuing on to Vimalamitra. The biography of Vairocana, the *Vairo Drabag*,[20] provides short biographical

sketches of the lives of these masters, some of whom were said to come from Oddiyana and others from regions of India. These may be found in translation in Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente's work *The Supreme Source*.[21]

The first of these masters was King Dhahenatalo who, although a direct disciple of Garab Dorje, received the complete teaching from Manjushrimitra. Dhahenatalo taught his son, King Thuwo Rajahati, who in turn taught his sister, Princess Barani. Princess Barani taught Nagaraja, who is thought to have been a bodhisattva appearing in the form of Lui Gyalpo Jogpo, one of the eight kings of the *naga* class of beings. Nagaraja taught the *yakshini*[22] named Bodhi. Thus, these last two teachers seem to have belonged to nonhuman classes of beings.

From the *yakshini* Bodhi the lineage continued to the prostitute Parani; from her, to the Kashmiri abbot Rabnang; from him, to the abbot Maharaja of Oddiyana; from him, to the princess Gomadevi; from her, to Atsantra aloke; from him, to the first Kukkuraja the Lord of Dogs; from him, to the Rishii Bhashita, an expert in the Vedas; from him, to the prostitute Buddhamati; and from her, to Nagarjuna. According to tradition, only one Nagarjuna exists: the famous scholar who established the Madhyamika philosophy and was also a renowned alchemist and *siddha* born four hundred years after the *parinirvana* of the Buddha. However, modern historians place Nagarjuna in the second century CE.

From Nagarjuna, the lineage went to the second Kukkuraja; from him, to the second Manjushrimitra or Manjushribhadra, then to Devaraja, to Buddhagupta, to the monk Shri Simha Prabata, and to Bhikshuni Ananda. However, since several of these teachers were contemporaries of Garab Dorje, they do not represent a true lineage. Moreover, Vimalamitra, who is listed at the conclusion of this line of masters, received the transmission from Shri Simha and not from Bhikshuni Ananda.

Shri Simha in particular, who in the Mind series tradition is cited as a disciple of Buddhagupta and as the master of Bhikshuni Ananda and Vimalamitra, is described in the Vast Space and Secret Instruction series of Dzogchen as a direct disciple of Manjushrimitra.

In any case, Shri Simha, said to have been of Burmese origin, is a figure of great historical relevance because he transmitted the Mind and Vast Space series of Dzogchen teachings to the eighth century Tibetan translator Vairocana, thus becoming a crucial link in their introduction into Tibet.[23]

The Mind Series of Dzogchen

It is said that at the end of his life, when Garab Dorje dissolved in a sphere of light in the primordial ground, he appeared in the sky above Manjushrimitra and dropped a casket of gold the size of a fingernail into Manjushrimitra's hands. This casket contained his testament in the form of three aphorisms that later came to be known as the *Three Phrases That Strike the Essence*, or the *Testament of Garab Dorje:*

Directly discover your own state,
Remain without any doubt,
Acquire confidence in natural liberation.

According to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Manjushrimitra, on the basis of this threefold testament, classified the teachings transmitted by Garab Dorje in the three series of Dzogchen or Atiyoga, namely, the Mind series, the Vast Space series, and the Secret Instruction or Upadesha series.

The essence of the path of Atiyoga is the method that directly and naturally liberates the individual in the state of primordial enlightenment. The Ati path involves neither renunciation nor acceptance; neither hope of attaining an exalted state nor fear of remaining an ordinary being in cyclic existence. Although the three series of Dzogchen are identical in this regard, they do differ with respect to their emphases and practice methods.

In Atiyoga, everything that exists—all phenomena that pertain to cyclic life and its transcendence—is the great sphere of the expanse of the true nature of reality, in essence, total wisdom, naturally present. As such, all is primordially enlightened, rendering unnecessary the performance of any action or application of effort. The distinctions in emphasis in the explanation of the three series of Dzogchen can be succinctly stated as follows:[24]

> The Mind series emphasizes freedom from the concept of something to be renounced, since all phenomena are nothing other than the mind's essence. The Vast Space series that transcends action emphasizes freedom from the concept of an antidote, since all phenomena are totally perfected in the primordial state of Samantabhadri, the true nature of reality. The profound Secret Instruction series emphasizes freedom from the limiting concepts both of things to be renounced and their antidotes, since the essential characteristic of everything is the real condition already established.

The specific distinction in practical application among the three series is outlined by DharmaShri in his *Commentary on The Three Vows* as follows:[25]

> The essence of the practice in the Mind series is to always be in the state beyond acceptance and rejection, based on the realization that all the appearances of the universe and beings are the ineffable dimension of reality (*dharmakaya*), the naturally present wisdom that is the very essence of mind.
>
> The essence of the practice in the Vast Space series is to always be in the state in which nothing is objectified, the authentic condition that is beyond effort, based on the realization that self-originated wisdom and all phenomena manifesting from it abide in no place other than the vast space of Samantabhadra, the authentic condition that is primordial liberation and natural purity.
>
> The Secret Instruction series is subdivided into outer, inner, secret, and most secret cycles. The essence of the practice in the Secret Instruction series from the perspective of the most secret and unsurpassable cycle is to realize mind's absence of base or root as primordial purity, and with that understanding to practice total relaxation, the great natural condition in which mind and appearances are left in the state of primordial liberation. Then, by opening the Buddha's treasure of the spontaneously perfect mandala of the Body dimension, one meditates on the path of the four lamps[26]—the direct crossing—which is to look directly at the spontaneously perfect mandala, the luminous clarity of self-originated wisdom. By means of this, phenomena exhaust themselves in the state of reality, and all aggregates and faculties are naturally purified.

The different emphasis in presentation and practice in the three series suggests that they represent a progression in the practice of Dzogchen. Manjushrimitra's classification of Garab Dorje's teachings in the three series also reflects three distinct moments of Dzogchen practice.

First, the testament's opening line, "Directly discover your own state," indicates that direct introduction is needed in which the master introduces the mind essence to the disciple who recognizes it through firsthand experience in a direct and nonconceptual manner. The instructions explaining the meaning of the mind essence and revealing the yogic contemplations that enable its recognition are emphasized mainly in the Mind series.

Subsequent to the discovery of the mind essence as one's own primordial state, such recognition is made an unwavering certainty, as indicated in the second line of the testament, "Remain without doubt," by developing the capacity to remain in a state of pure awareness that is one's primordial state. This is achieved through the contemplative methods presented in the Vast Space

series.

Finally, the testament's third line, "Acquire confidence in natural liberation," indicates that it is necessary to make natural liberation permeate all aspects of one's existence until, through crucial body postures, ways of gazing, and breathing techniques of the direct crossing practice of the Secret Instruction series, deceptive vision is ended in one's own ground of being.

Although the three series represent a progression, it would be incorrect to think that the achievement of the final result of Dzogchen practice necessarily requires following the three in a gradual manner, or that only the Secret Instruction series is considered important. In fact, each series represents a path of total realization, fully complete in itself.

Bodhicitta

The Sanskrit term *bodhicitta*, rendered in this book as primordial state, is affixed to the titles of most scriptures of the Mind series of Dzogchen, and is commonly used in those texts. In fact, in the Mind series of Dzogchen, mind can be understood as an abbreviation for pure and total mind (*bodhicitta*). Pure means that the mind essence is primordially free from any impurity or obstacle, whereas total means that it is the very essence or ultimate nature of everything. Mind refers to the wisdom that cannot be sought but that is the source of all manifestation. Such pure and total mind is the enlightened nature of all sentient beings regardless of their condition in existence.

Although *bodhicitta* assumes different meanings according to the context in which it is used, the term shares a fundamental connotation in all its usages: *bodhicitta* is the very stuff of enlightenment, either as a cause of enlightenment or as inherent enlightenment.

In the context of the way of the bodhisattva (the Mahayana), where it represents the central principle of the spiritual path, *bodhicitta* is explained as a mind (*citta*) directed toward enlightenment (*bodhi*). This mind of enlightenment can be relative or ultimate depending on its focus. The relative mind of enlightenment has as its focus the infinity of sentient beings. It is an altruistic intention to attain enlightenment that can have two aspects: a simple aspiration to awaken, and an aspiration to awaken that ventures toward that goal by implementing the six means of transcendence (*paramita*). *Bodhicitta* springs from compassion and love and serves as the entrance to the Mahayana path.

The absolute mind of enlightenment, whose focus is emptiness (that is the

nature of the mind and of all things), consists in the direct and nonconceptual understanding of reality or emptiness born from meditation at the first level of realization of the bodhisattva on the path of seeing.[27] The absolute mind of enlightenment, which is an understanding of emptiness that possesses the essence of compassion, arises as a result of learning and pondering on the scriptural teachings, realizing them as spiritual accomplishment, or both of these together. It may also arise from a realization awakened in the depth of one's heart through the blessing of the marvelous connection between the student and a qualified teacher. In all cases, however, according to the gradual tradition[28] of Sutra, the actual cause of the absolute mind of enlightenment is the merit generated by immense quantities of altruistic deeds.

These two aspects of enlightened mind, relative and absolute, are the two branches of the path that serve as the seed or potential that blossoms into the state of enlightenment. Based on these two, one traverses the five paths and the ten levels of realization of the bodhisattva[29] by gradually removing obstacles and developing qualities until total enlightenment is achieved.

In the tantras, particularly the highest tantras, the term *bodhicitta* is endowed with special connotations. On the relative level, the term denotes not only the altruistic mind of enlightenment as understood in the Mahayana, but also refers primarily to the seminal essence of man and woman. The seminal essence serves as the basis or support on which the ultimate mind of enlightenment manifests and is experienced. This absolute mind of enlightenment is the total bliss devoid of any concept, the indivisibility of bliss and emptiness, the essence of the mind. Such total bliss is not newly created by spiritual practice, but is the innate nature of the ordinary consciousness of each being.

The tantras speak of total bliss when no concepts of the arising, abiding, and cessation of phenomena and when no grasping at the duality of self and others exist. Total bliss is defined as the wisdom of pure awareness that—although pertaining neither to cyclic existence nor to its transcendence—pervades everything and always possesses the nature of immutable bliss, regardless of circumstance. Thus, total bliss here does not refer to the ordinary experience of pleasure that contrasts with pain.

At the starting point when the spiritual path has not yet been entered, "innate nature that is total bliss" refers to the reality beyond the grasp of conceptual mind, the reality that pervades the totality of cyclic existence and its transcendence, the base or essence of all. It is also called causal tantra.

This reality remains hidden to ordinary persons until its discovery through

powerful experiences when the tantric path has been entered. At that time, innate nature denotes the total bliss that occurs when vital energy dissolves in the central channel, a dissolution brought about by practices such as *pranayama*, inner heat, or sexual practices.[30] Thus, central to all tantric methods is the experience of total bliss through the progression of the four joys, the last of which is the innate joy,[31] the innate nature of mind. In order to recognize and stabilize this bliss, the tantric practitioner must withhold its basis, that is, the seminal essence. For this reason, in the path of Tantra great emphasis is placed on controlling the seminal essence, and several vows concern not allowing its release.

At the time of the result, that same innate nature of the base, by being contemplated on the path, becomes the great innate nature free from obscuration and endowed with the two purities, natural purity and purity from adventitious stains.

Although in principle *bodhicitta* in its absolute aspect as explained in Tantra is not fundamentally different from the pure and total mind or primordial state taught in the Mind series of Dzogchen, the methods for discovering and remaining in the knowledge of such a state presented in the Mind series are radically different.

In Tantra, particularly in the higher tantras, the practitioner, having received the appropriate empowerment for a major deity mandala, applies the method of transforming the impure vision of his or her body and environment into the pure vision of the deity and its mandala. This method entails the visualization of the characteristic features of the deity's body and the divine mansion of the mandala, the performance of symbolic gestures or mudras, and the recitation of mantras. On the basis of such transformation effected in the phase of creation,[32] the yogin enters the stage in which the divine transformation is recognized as indivisible from the mind essence. The result is the knowledge of the Great Symbol[33] effected in the phase of completion[34] in which the yogin works with the so-called *vajra* body, made of channels, the energy-winds, and the vital essences.

Success on the Tantric path can be guaranteed only if strict adherence to various vows and pledges relating to body, voice, and mind is observed. Moreover, the practice must be based on the ten topics of the tantras, namely, the view of essential reality, transcendent conduct, the manifestation of the mandala, initiation or the sequential process of empowerment, pledges not to be transgressed, enlightened activity to display, the means of accomplishment or

sadhana to be practiced, contemplation, offerings to fulfill the goal, mantras to be recited, and symbolic gestures to be executed.[35] Wisdom, encompassing and including the universe and all beings, is awakened in one who follows these instructions for realizing the path that relies principally on wisdom derived from meditation.

As mentioned above, in the Mind series of Dzogchen *bodhicitta* is defined as pure and total mind. This pure and total mind is the essence of the ordinary mind of each individual, whose nature is indivisible emptiness and clarity.

Mind essence here is not a mere emptiness devoid of energy as conceived by most followers of the Sutra path, but is rather the mind essence that is the source of all that exists. Its creative energy is all that manifests as the outer world and as living beings, yet, like the sky, it encompasses everything without itself being anything in particular.

Based on this knowledge and unlike the Tantra path, reality in the Mind series is not split into unenlightened impure vision and enlightened pure vision. All that manifests, pure or impure, is seen as the clarity of the pure and total mind and as such, is already enlightened without the need for improvement or transformation.

How does one reawaken to the pure and total mind in the praxis of the Mind series of Dzogchen? In this regard, first of all, it must be made clear that pure and total mind is not reached by treading a gradual path and arriving at successive levels of realization; nor can it be pursued by any conceptual means, because this enlightenment exists primordially as the nature of one’s self. Moreover, since it is the primordially existent, final attainment, it cannot be reached by effort or action.

To reawaken the pure and total mind, one needs to be directly introduced to it by an authentic master who dwells in that state, and then to apply the contemplation that enhances the ability to abide in such knowledge. However, as will be explained in this book, this does not imply progression through stages of different realizations, for the pure and total mind is itself the unique level of enlightenment.

In the Mind series of Dzogchen, the principal way of approaching the natural arising of knowledge is by experience gained through the four contemplations or four yogas: the contemplation of the calm state; the contemplation of the immovable state; the contemplation of total sameness that effects integration of the calm and the immovable states; and the contemplation of the self-perfection of wisdom. These contemplations induce an experiential ascertainment of the

view set forth in *The Marvelous Primordial State* translated below, as well as in other scriptures of the Mind series. Through such experiential ascertainment one meets face to face one's primordial state of enlightenment.

The Scriptures of the Mind Series and *The Marvelous Primordial State*

Evidence shows that the scriptures of the Dzogchen Mind series began to be introduced into Tibet during the eighth century CE. Today these texts are found principally in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, as well as in other compilations such as the *Collected Tantras of Vairocana*. Only a few of these, such as *The All-Creating King* and the *Meditation on the Primordial State*: *Extracting Pure Gold from Ore*, are found in the Tibetan Buddhist canon.

Scholars widely agree that the Mind series is contained in twenty-one main texts. While these are the most representative, the section of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition* devoted to the Mind series also contains a vast literature consisting of root tantras, exegetical tantras, secondary tantras, and secret instruction tantras. On the other hand, the collection known as *Transmitted Precepts of the Old Tradition* contains texts and instructions on the practical application of the Mind series originally from Oddiyana, with supplements added later by Tibetan masters.

The practices and methods of the Mind series that have been preserved to the present day were systematized in the eleventh century by Nyang Yeshe Jungne,[36] in what is known as the Nyang system, by Aro Yeshe Jungne[37] in the tenth century in the Aro system, and in the Kham system.[38]

The *Eighteen Major Crucial Teachings* translated from the Oddiyana language into Tibetan figure among the twenty-one texts. The first five of these eighteen, known as "the five texts translated earlier," were translated into Tibetan by Vairocana on his return to Tibet from Oddiyana. The remaining thirteen, known as "the thirteen texts translated later," are so named because according to tradition they were translated by Vimalamitra with the assistance of Nyag Jnanakumara[39] and Yudra Nyingpo,[40] after Vairocana had returned from exile in Tsawa Rong[41] in eastern Tibet. The last three of the twenty-one texts, also translated by Vairocana, are considered by some as separate from the eighteen.

According to Longchenpa, the great fourteenth-century compiler of the

Dzogchen teaching, the twenty-one major texts of the Mind series are comprised of the five texts translated earlier:

1. *The Cuckoo of Pure Awareness*
2. *The Great Potency*
3. *The Flight of the* Garuda
4. *The Meditation on the Primordial State: Extracting Pure Gold from Ore*
5. *The Unwaning Standard of Victory: The Total Space of Vajrasattva*

and the thirteen texts translated later:

6. *The Supreme Peak*
7. *The King of Space*
8. *The [Jewel]-Encrusted Ornament of Bliss*
9. *All-Encompassing Perfection*
10. *The Essence of The Primordial State*
11. *Infinite Bliss*
12. *The Wheel of Life*
13. *The Six Spheres of the Primordial State*
14. *All-Penetrating Perfection*
15. *The Wish-Fulfilling Precious Jewel*
16. *The Primordial State in Which Everything Is Unified*
17. *The Supreme Lord*
18. *The Realization of the True Meaning of Meditation*

and the three texts classified separately:

19. *The All-Creating King*
20. *The Marvelous Primordial State*
21. *The Ten Concluding Teachings*[42]

In Longchenpa's list, due either to the exegetical nature of the text or for some unknown reason, *The Marvelous Primordial State* is not included among the *Eighteen Major Crucial Teachings*. However, in several other authoritative sources including the *History of the Teaching: Feast of the Wise* of Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa,[43] in Vairocana's biography, in Nyangral Nyima Özer's[44] rediscovered biography of Padmasambhava,[45] in the history of the teaching by

Gyalse Thugchog Tsal,[46] and in the *Transmitted Precepts of the Old Tradition*, it is listed as one of the *Eighteen Major Teachings*.

Moreover, the *Eighteen Empowerments of the Energy of Pure Awareness*[47]—the gateway for presenting the methods and the practices related to the *Eighteen Major Crucial Teachings* employed by the masters of the past and committed to writing by Yungtön Dorje Pal[48]—considers *The Marvelous Primordial State* as one of the *Eighteen Major Crucial Teachings*.

Whatever the case may be, the forty-five citations from *The Marvelous Primordial State* included in the extraordinarily significant work, *Light for the Eyes of Contemplation*[49] by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, the presence of this text in the *Collected Tantras of Vairocana*, and its three different versions in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition* provide strong evidence that *The Marvelous Primordial State* is an important text of the Mind series of Dzogchen.

The Particularity of *The Marvelous Primordial State*

The Marvelous Primordial State is a medium-length text, partly in verse and partly in prose. Although it is largely unknown outside the milieu of scholarly Dzogchen practitioners and of a few academic circles, its great importance in the Mind series and in Dzogchen is evidenced by the numerous citations found in Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's *Light for the Eyes of Contemplation*, as well as in the works of other important scholars and accomplished masters. It can therefore be considered a significant root or source of the Dzogchen Mind series. Along with the corollary work, *The All-Creating King* in the Mind series literature, it presents the view of the Dzogchen teaching in an uncompromising manner.

Unlike *The All-Creating King*, this scripture does not employ a vast range of technical Buddhist terminology and categories from the sutras and tantras. Moreover, it does not have a tightly-structured textual body. *The Marvelous Primordial State* is erratic and seems to be largely composed of spontaneous utterances whose relationship to one another is not always apparent. Such difficulty may possibly explain the existence of the different versions, over which editors struggled to make a coherent text by modifying the grammar, adding a word here and there, and slightly rearranging the contents. Such stylistic differences could place the origin of *The Marvelous Primordial State* much earlier than that of *The All-Creating King*.

Also of great scholarly interest is the fact that chapters 9, 12, 14, 17, 18, and

19 of *The Total Bliss of The Marvelous Primordial State* (henceforth M1) and *The Marvelous Primordial State* (henceforth M2) contain about thirty lines of verse, some identical to and some closely resembling lines from the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*.[50] Not all these lines, however, are in the order found in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti;* often they are preceded and followed by different lines.

The *Manjushrinamasamgiti* is deemed one of the earliest tantras to have appeared in India and for its importance is the first tantra placed in the section devoted to the tantric scriptures of the Buddhist canon in the Tibetan language. The *Manjushrinamasamgiti* was first translated during the early propagation of Buddhism in Tibet by Padmasambhava, Kawa Paltseg (eighth century), and Chogro Lui Gyaltsen (eighth century)[51] and was revised by Vairocana.

During the later propagation, it was translated again by Rinchen Zangpo[52] (958-1055) and by Lodrö Tenpa,[53] and then revised by other translators. Its importance is acknowledged both in the new and the old schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Known as *The Net of the Magical Manifestation of Manjushri* in the old school, it is considered as a tantra of the Body dimension associated with Manjushri. In India it appears to have been part of a larger cycle of teachings also known as *The Net of the Magical Manifestation of Manjushri* in sixteen thousand verses. Within the cycle itself, only the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* and a text on the benefits of reading it have been translated into Tibetan.

This scripture has periodically been viewed as belonging to different classes of tantra. Lalitavajra in India[54] and then Taranatha[55] (1575-1635) in Tibet considered the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* as a father tantra. Among the three kinds of father tantras, namely: tantras for counteracting attachment, ignorance, and hatred, they classified it as one of the ignorance type. Taranatha considered it a tantra counteracting ignorance because it teaches the path of nonconceptuality exclusively as a method to transform ignorance and to spiritually uplift ignorant persons. It does not emphasize the ordinary path of attachment or wrathful activities.

Said to be the lord of all tantras, it has been commented on from a range of viewpoints by various masters. The bodhisattvas Vajrapani, Pundarika, and Vajragarbha[56] discussed it from the perspective of the *Kalacakra*, while the pandits Manjushrikirti[57] and Manjushrimitra explained it in terms of the Yogatantra.[58] Some commentators in India such as Garab Dorje expounded it from the Dzogchen perspective, as did some writers in Tibet. In India, it has also

been explained from the Madhyamika point of view.

Moreover, in chapters 2, 3, 13, 14, 21, and 26 of M1 and M2, *The Marvelous Primordial State* contains twenty-eight lines, some identical to and some closely resembling lines found in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra.* Along with the *Manjushrinamasamgiti,* the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* is reputed by modern scholars to be one of the first tantras brought from the land of Oddiyana to India. Present-day scholars place its appearance in India around 150-250 CE. With the above-mentioned exceptions, both are generally considered as father tantras. In the threefold division of father tantras, The *Guhyasamaja* belongs to the type for counteracting attachment. It appears in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition* translated by Buddhaguhya and Drogmi Palgyi Yeshe,[59] although *The Blue Annals*[60] cites Che Trashi[61] as its translator during the earlier propagation of Buddhism in Tibet. In the Tibetan Buddhist canon it appears as a later translation done by Shraddhakaravarman[62] and Rinchen Zangpo.

That *The Marvelous Primordial State* unmistakably contains the same lines as the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* and the *Guhyasamaja* cannot be a coincidence. To our knowledge, the numerous lines resembling those of *The Marvelous Primordial State* are found only in these two tantras. However, it is difficult to say whether the redactors of *The Marvelous Primordial State* borrowed lines from the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* and the *Guhyasamaja*, or vice versa.

Adding to the conundrum is the fact that Nagarjuna and Jnanapada, the forefathers of the two major traditions (the arya and the Jnanapada) of the *Guhyasamaja*, are connected to the Mind series of Dzogchen, Nagarjuna directly and Jnanapada somewhat indirectly. In fact, the lineage of the Mind series teachings mentioned above counts Nagarjuna as one of its masters; and Jnanapada, whose *Guhyasamaja* tradition also spread to some extent during the earlier propagation of Buddhism in Tibet, is said to have been a student of an incarnation of Manjushrimitra who was the direct disciple of Garab Dorje. Moreover, the Buddhist canon in the Tibetan language contains many works on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* attributed to Manjushrimitra. But the threads connecting *The Marvelous Primordial State* with the *Guhyasamaja* and with the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* as revealed above will require further disentanglement.

From the characteristics described above, *The Marvelous Primordial State* may be one of the earliest and most ancient texts of the Mind series and of Dzogchen in general. Its bold introduction of the Dzogchen view that is the basis for its application, does not specifically examine its methods of application, the communication of which is the domain of masters who have realized the

knowledge of Dzogchen and who judiciously transmit its methods to their students.

The Forty Chapters of *The Marvelous Primordial State*

The content of *The Marvelous Primordial State* according to the chapter structure found in the text translated by Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara (M2) is introduced below.

Title: *The Marvelous Primordial State*

Although it is likely that the original text of *The Marvelous Primordial State* was in the language of Oddiyana and later translated into Sanskrit, neither of these versions survives.

The Tibetan translation gives the Sanskrit title as *Bodhicitta Sopashika* and the Tibetan title as *Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba*. The meaning of *bodhicitta* in the context of the Mind series of Dzogchen has been briefly explained above. The term *bodhicitta* is usually affixed to the various titles of the scriptures of the Mind series, where it figures more prominently than the term Dzogchen. In our English version of the title and in the course of the translation, *bodhicitta* has been rendered as primordial state. *Sopashika* may be the result of a copyist's deformation of the Sanskrit term *saubhashika* in which *so* (through the accidental omission of one of the two *naro* signs) may stand for *sau* (the vriddhi form of *su*, meaning beautiful) and *pashika* for *bhashika*, meaning language. *Saubhashika* is related to *subhasha* (eloquence) and *subhashita* (eloquently spoken), the equivalent of the Tibetan *legs bshad*, a traditional designation for the words of the Buddha. The Tibetan text translates *saubhashika* as *rmad byung* meaning marvelous, a term commonly used in translations from the Sanskrit to Tibetan to render another Sanskrit term, *adbhuta*, which also means marvelous. Thus, the title of this scripture is *The Marvelous Primordial State*.

Immediately following the title, our text states that its content is a part or section of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, thus indicating that this crucial teaching of the Mind series is but a fragment of a larger cycle of teachings known by the same name. Thus it is similar to root tantras such as the Kalacakra or the Hevajra that are considered to be condensed formulations of once extant longer tantras.

After this statement, an homage, customary at the beginning of such compositions, is paid to Vajrasattva, symbol of the primordial state in the form of the Teacher. However, later in the text the Teacher, whose identity remains vague, is referred to by other appellations, and Vajrasattva appears as the interlocutor of the Teacher. Thus in the actual text, Vajrasattva symbolizes the ordinary mind that attempts to recognize its own true nature as embodied in the Teacher. However, as in tantras in general, the teacher and the interlocutor are not different, since they represent the very same reality appearing under the aegis of two different roles to create a dialogue in which the truth of this sameness may be more easily revealed.

Chapter 1: *The Setting of the Teaching*

The actual body of the text begins in the first chapter. Its opening remarks are reminiscent of the prologue typical of the Buddhist sutras—later replicated in the tantras—describing the setting in which the Buddha's discourses were delivered. Here the scene is set in a spatial and temporal dimension identified in vague terms as a buddhafield, its beautiful mansions filled with deities and with an audience of the buddhas of the three times, yogins, and various types of nonhumans. The audience is further identified as the retinue of the teacher, yogins and others who are worthy receptacles for this uncommon Teaching. The nonhumans who are present are those who paid obeisance to the spiritual teaching, while those who did not were excluded, for our text admonishes that to reject this teaching once it has been heard would bear unwanted negative consequences.

The main subject matter of the following chapters, the primordial state, is briefly introduced as the secret accomplishment and as the Mind of the Lotus Heruka. In Mahayoga, among the *herukas* of the five enlightened families, this *heruka* belongs to the Lotus or Padma family. As a figure associated with this text, Padma Heruka may symbolize the activity of the Lotus family, related to the potential of the primordial state that unfolds in birth and creation. The Lotus family accomplishes the benefit of beings whose predominant emotion is attachment, particularly sexual attachment, through which life in cyclic existence begins. In Tantra, the "royal," and most skillful means of working with this passion is the sexual union of the male and female. The inner significance of this is the union of method and knowledge, the two facets of reality that are represented respectively by self-perfectedness and primordial purity, the

indivisibility of which is the supremely creative primordial state.

Unlike the introductory preamble found in sutras and tantras, here our text does not mention the Teacher, implying perhaps that the transmission of the teaching does not stem from an actual physical primordial Buddha whose identity has been lost in time. Because the authentic condition of each individual can serve, at any point, as the source of the teaching, the real primordial Buddha is one's self.

For the most part and until the thirtieth chapter, possibly in accord with Buddhist tradition, the text is presented as a dialogue—like those found in Mahayana sutras—between the Teacher and Vajrasattva, whom the Teacher often addresses as Mahasattva. Mostly he is referred to as Bhagavan (literally, the Victorious One),[63] at other times as Buddha (Enlightened One), as Vairocana, as Great Vairocana, as All-Knowing, an epithet of Vairocana, as All-Knowing Dharma Lord, as Glorious Samantabhadra, as King of Nonconceptuality, as Sugata, or as the Teacher.[64]

The figure of Vairocana as the Teacher is central to the message of this text. Vairocana is the one who manifests form and as such represents the creative force that gives rise to the universe and its beings. For the same reason, in tantric mandalas Vairocana or a deity belonging to the Transcendent family of Vairocana, usually occupies the central position. Vairocana is also the symbol of purity of form, and because of this association is sometimes related to three transmissions (mental, symbolic, and oral), as well as to a special cosmology in which the worlds of our universe are described as embedded in and surrounding the body of Vairocana. It is said that through the blessing of the dimension of reality or *dharmakaya*, the pure realm called Ghanavyuha manifests—with the teachers of the five enlightened families—as the dimension of perfect resources or *sambhogakaya* in a great display of undifferentiated wisdom and form, for the sake of bewildered sentient beings who do not recognize the primordial ground. In order to guide these beings to liberation,[65] these teachers then project infinite buddhafields within and around the body of Vairocana. Thus it can be evinced why this text, which describes how the entire universe is in fact a pure manifestation of the individual's primordial state, presents Vairocana as the Teacher.

Chapter 2: *The Marvelous Primordial State*

Bearing the same title as the text, this chapter describes the Teacher in the pure

realm of Akanishta as dwelling in the deep absorption of contemplation. Akanishta here is a name given to the dimension of enlightenment that manifests in and of itself, the essential reality not located in any direction of the universe, possessing no size, boundary, or orientation. With his gaze, the Teacher makes Vajrasattva understand that the entire universe and all enlightened beings are essentially the same, for they arise from the individual's own true state, and that everything is the mandala-like manifestation of Body, Voice, and Mind inherent in that state.

In this chapter our text employs the expression "one's self." Here, this does not refer to the notion of an I or self formed through long habituation to an identification of the individual with body and mind. Nor does it refer to a universal self in which the individuality of each being is cancelled. One's self stands for the true self of the individual that is none other than his or her original and natural condition of being: simple, pure, and indefinable presence. Thus, this word need not entangle the reader in concepts related to the Buddhist negation of a self.

In gratitude for having received such a revelation, Vajrasattva praises the Teacher and the principle he expounded, and expresses the wish to realize its meaning. Cryptically, in apparent contradiction with this expression, Vajrasattva says that he himself has awakened anew by understanding the primordial state. In any case, this last statement indicates that such understanding occurs not as a result of effort or seeking, but in accordance with the principle of nonaction. Just as the sun emerges from behind clouds, when the principle of nonaction is implemented, understanding spontaneously manifests.

Then Vajrasattva asks the Teacher to further clarify an understanding that even the buddhas had not grasped. Although this last statement seems a contradiction in that becoming a buddha implies the realization of the real nature of everything, here we should consider it in relation to the teachers of the three enlightened dimensions. In *The All-Creating King*, it is said that the teacher of the dimension of reality or *dharmakaya* is the prime mover of the doctrine of the three inner tantras (Maha, Anu, and Ati); the teacher of the dimension of perfect resources or *sambhogakaya* is the source of the doctrine of the outer tantras (Kriya, Ubhaya, and Yoga); and the teacher of the dimension of emanation or *nirmanakaya* is the source of the Hinayana (*shravakayana*, *pratyekabuddhayana*) and the Mahayana.[66] In this regard, our text states: "[*Even*] *the* sugatas *had not understood it previously*," perhaps implying that the teachings of the lower vehicles, such as the Hinayana and Mahayana

promulgated by the teacher of the dimension of emanation, do not explicitly present the principle of the primordial state as explained in this scripture.

Then the Teacher offers some profound words explaining the real meaning of meditation, saying that meditation should not be confined to concepts, for there is nothing upon which to meditate. True meditation occurs when a being is in the natural condition, without creating mental constructs, and where ideas of a meditator, meditation, a reality to be meditated upon, or of enlightenment, are absent. Why? Because in this way, the natural enlightenment in which body, voice, and mind are the five wisdoms that are the five facets of the immaculate primordial state is experienced. No realization, no enlightenment is to be attained apart from that which is already present in this natural condition. Unchanging and beyond the characteristics of perceivable objects that are absent in it, the natural condition is the primordial state. Moreover, all that manifests from it, such as the Body, Voice, and Mind of all enlightened beings as well as all the infinite universes, are the primordial state itself. This unique reality is said to be the supreme secret view.

Chapter 3: *The True Nature of Reality*

This chapter explains that reality is one's natural state. This in itself is the essence of enlightenment, beyond a goal to be reached in time. Thus, there is no enlightenment to be sought, and no objective to be attained. Those who search for an enlightenment outside their actual condition are moving further and further away from it. Reality is the emptiness, the primordial purity, that is the basis from which all phenomena arise, and these phenomena have no essence. Thus, since nothing really exists, there is nothing on which to meditate. Luminous awareness of one's self, beyond subject and object, expands without the need for an intentional meditation. Experiencing this, one finds that all things are perfect and makes no distinction between enlightened and ordinary sentient beings.

Chapter 4: *The Greatness*

In this chapter, the Teacher says, *"I am the origin, the essence, and also the end of all Enlightened Ones and of all sentient beings."* Just as in *The All-Creating King*, the word I refers to the state of the individual, and not literally to the Teacher who expounds the tantra. All comes from that I, not to be confused with

a creator God or with the I conceived through ignorance that clings to the body and mind as truly existent. Instead, it is the I that is consummate wisdom already present within each individual, whose clarity, devoid of intentionality, like a mirror, manifests as everything. Therefore, the great yogin who encounters the principle of such enlightenment without having done anything with the mind to understand it, is the embodiment of all realized ones.

All beings possess the precious nature of the three dimensions or *kayas* of enlightenment, and everything that arises and manifests is experienced and enjoyed as a vision created by one's self. These three dimensions (reality, perfect resources, and emanation) posited in the Mahayana as the final attainment of a gradual path, here—from an uncommon perspective—are already present as the very nature of each sentient being. Pure awareness whose nature is luminous clarity, is the dimension of perfect resources; the variety of phenomena in which such clarity appears, is the dimension of emanation; and the unborn nature of the mind and phenomena, regardless of how they appear, is the dimension of reality.

Upon hearing the words pronounced by the Teacher, Vajrasattva realizes his own true condition and expresses the marvelousness of such a realization.

Then the Teacher says that he alone existed before the elements (earth, water, fire, wind, and space), and thus before everything else. This statement implies that prior to the arising of the mind and the consequent dualization into subject and object, cyclic existence (samsara) and its transcendence (nirvana), and so on, only the undivided state of the individual exists. Delusory vision begins only when the mind arising from emptiness is not recognized as the motion of the infinite potentiality of one's self. Prior to that, nothing can be identified conceptually as high or low, big or small, pure or impure, existent or nonexistent. Thus, all that appears is a fleeting vision of positive or negative thoughts, but one's self cannot be conceived and thus has no phenomenal existence. It is present because it is prior to the appearance of everything: everything comes from it, yet it has no beginning.

All the qualities of Body, Voice, and Mind of realized beings come from the primordial state—one's self—encompassing all enlightened beings of the universe and all times, and already including all powerful yogic methods and their resultant experiences and realizations. Yogins who have such knowledge are already at the level of enlightenment without having trod a path, since their state itself is the sum of all levels of realization.

Chapter 5: *The Proclamation of the Secret*

Here the Teacher stresses the principle that since the self that is primordial purity, unpolluted in any way, and is the creator of everything, consequently all phenomena are pure and unconditioned and cannot be turned into conceptual objects. One's self is the very state of the indivisibility of emptiness and vision; thus, phenomena arising from one's self cannot be measured or judged by the mind. One's self, from which everything originates is the original Buddha that existed before any concepts took shape. Apropos of this, the Teacher says, "I arose before any of those things arose."

Chapter 6: *The Miracle*

Here it is revealed that although the mind represents duality, the mind's own essence, resembling space, is unpolluted by duality, and there is no need to purify that which is already pure from the beginning. Moreover, since mind has no base from which it stems, it is unborn. Just that is enlightenment that has no cause. When the mind essence recognizes itself through its own natural wisdom, all the manifestations of energy are recognized as being already perfectly present in one's self. This is conventionally called the attainment of enlightenment.

All the manifestations of energy are here referred to as method. Method and knowledge represent the two branches of the path to realization in the various spiritual vehicles. The lower the vehicle, the more method and knowledge are divergent and need to be reunited. In the higher vehicles of Tantra, method (bliss) and knowledge (emptiness) are recognized as the constituents of one's nature, yet method is also seen as the way to arrive at the wisdom that discerns reality. In Dzogchen, method is represented by the phenomenal, which is the manifestation of one's energy. Just as reflections in a mirror make clear the nature of the mirror, so by employing the method of our experience of the phenomenal in a state of pure awareness, we gain knowledge of the nondual reality that is our fundamental nature.

Chapter 7: *The Secret Nature*

Here it is explained that one's primordial condition is present as the quality of enlightened Body, Voice, and Mind. To what do the terms Mind, Voice, and Body refer? Mind, the reality that transcends appearances, is the very knowledge that is the path to enlightenment, unattached and all-encompassing. Body is all

phenomena in a limitless array that presents itself to one's perception, a mandala that appears naturally and does not need to be assembled. In this regard, our text states that phenomena cannot be objects of thought and judgment, and by saying so, implicitly indicates the true nature of meditation. Meditation is a condition of pure awareness that has no reference point. It does not approach the true nature of reality with an intention or a fixed concept, for the true nature of reality is not an object separate from that awareness. The yogin who dwells in that awareness does not have the idea of being in a state of meditation or of attaining enlightenment, yet is neither distracted nor separate from meditation. Thus in Atiyoga, it is sufficient to remain in a natural state of pure awareness without thinking and analyzing, without considering thoughts, emotions, and so on, as negative factors to be overcome, and without considering the true nature of reality as something to be accessed. Voice is all sound that has not been created and manifests spontaneously from one's self.

Body, Voice, and Mind are not confined to, and indeeed transcend the characteristic marks and signs ascribed to the Buddha's Body, Voice, and Mind in the context of the Mahayana. Yet, they manifest as the self-existing five dimensions or *kayas*. Here these five most probably refer to the forms of buddhas of the five families, including their consorts, their retinue of male and female bodhisattvas, and so on, that are the purity of the aggregates, elements, and other aspects of existence as described in chapter 20. Thus, the phenomenal world of matter composed of particles of the four elements—earth, water, fire, and air—plus space, is nothing other than these five forms. The pure essence of these elements is one's own state, and their radiance is the wisdom of one's state. Thus, the totality of phenomena including sentient beings has no essence apart from pure awareness that is the enlightenment whose attainment requires no striving.

In its conclusion, this chapter presents the semantic meaning of *bodhicitta* (here translated as primordial state) according to the three parts of the Tibetan term for *bodhicitta*, that is, *byang chub sems* or pure and total mind. Our text tells us that pure refers to the utter purity of all things that manifest from one's state; total refers to the knowledge that all things are an indivisible reality, and mind refers to the self-existing contemplative clarity that is always present as the nature of the indivisible reality of one's primordial state.

Chapter 8: *The Path of Liberation*

This chapter is central to the text. Here the Teacher sets forth the five ordinary emotions of attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy as the raw material for the Dzogchen path of natural liberation. In the sutras these five emotions are regarded as poisons and as enemies and as such, must first be suppressed by applying the appropriate antidote, and then eliminated through meditation on emptiness, the universal antidote. For attachment, one applies the antidote of meditation on the skeleton of the person to whom one is attached; for hatred, meditation on loving kindness; and for ignorance, meditation on the twelve interdependent links, and so on. Conversely, in the highest tantras the energy of emotions is recognized as valuable: emotions, heightened through a process of transformation, become useful tools on the spiritual path. Such a process may involve, for example, purifying ordinary attachment by experiencing it while imagining oneself as a deity in passionate union with his consort, purifying ordinary anger by experiencing oneself in imagination as a wrathful deity, and so on. In this and other ways, emotions are gradually transformed into wisdom. Accordingly, abandonment and transformation are the approaches that characterize the ways of Sutra and Tantra, respectively.

Although the nonconceptual aspect of the completion phase of the highest tantras employs methods of purifying emotions that do not involve imagination —such as looking into the essence of the emotions—these methods are still based on the notion that ordinary emotions need to be transformed, and they require a preliminary transformation of oneself into a deity. Thus, the approaches of both Sutra and Tantra are within the realm of the dualistic workings of the mind and are based on concepts of the need to apply antidotes and transformations.

Dismantling the conviction of the followers of Sutra that emotions are poisons and the certainty of the followers of Tantra that ordinary emotions need to be transformed into wisdom, Dzogchen asserts that emotions have always existed and will always exist as part of the nature of each being. Emotions are the pure energy of the mind essence, beyond the label “emotion.” An indivisible reality unrelated to time and thus to circumstance, emotions are a total sameness, that sameness from which arise the multifarious tantric deities representing the various aspects of the body and mind.

In Dzogchen, as the title of this chapter indicates, the five emotions in their ordinary aspects are paths to liberation. How? If one recognizes emotions as the energy of one’s state without falling into duality. If, when emotions arise one remains in the natural condition—in the unborn essence of mind—with no moral

judgment regarding the content of what is arising in the mind and with no attempt to correct the ongoing experience, the emotions will naturally disentangle themselves without having to be abandoned or transformed.

In the moment of disentanglement, emotions are spontaneously recognized as the five wisdoms. Thus, if one remains anchored to the unborn essence of mind, when attachment arises upon encountering something agreeable, the mind's essence manifests with pleasure: this is the discerning wisdom of the Lotus family of Amitabha. Anchored in the same way, when anger arises upon encountering something disagreeable, the mind's essence manifests with clarity: this is the mirror-like wisdom of the Vajra family of Akshobhya. When ignorance arises upon encountering something neutral, the mind's essence manifests in the absence of thoughts: this is the wisdom of the expanse of the true nature of reality of the Transcendent family of Vairocana. When pride arises upon meeting an inferior, the mind's essence manifests as the stillness of no differentiation: this is the wisdom of total sameness of the Jewel family of Ratnasambhava. When jealousy arises upon meeting an equal or a superior, the mind's essence manifests as the perception that all things are dependent on mental judgments of high and low, good and bad, and so on: this is the wisdom that accomplishes the activities of the Action family of Amoghasiddhi. In this perspective, far from being an impediment, the emotions manifest as the path of freedom.

Since a detailed, precise explanation of the emotions as wisdom would be considered the domain of oral instructions, it is not presented in this chapter. Here, in what seems an upside-down view of the ordinary meaning of the emotions, because of their similar aspects, various types of understanding that represent facets of the knowledge of one's true condition are intentionally called by the names of the five emotions. For example, enjoyment of the objects of the senses knowing that they arise from one's self is termed attachment. This implies that through full enjoyment of the objects of the senses without the imposition of the dualistic notions of the one who experiences and the thing experienced, the sense objects become a means to enhance the knowledge of one's true condition instead of a cause of binding one to cyclic existence.

Energy or movement released from one's state, the underlying factor determining the manifestation of phenomena, is anger. This energy or movement is not different from the primordial emptiness that is the very nature of phenomena and of all the emotions. Thus, unwillingness to block any of the five emotions based on this profound knowledge is termed anger.

Knowing that the true state is that in which all is indivisible, equal, undifferentiated, complete, and unlimited causes the concepts that differentiate and categorize things in terms of philosophical views, to vanish. Not even the concept that all is the same remains. There is no lingering belief that something arises, exists, or ends, apart from one's self. There is no concept of a gradation of levels of realization. There is no concept of the emanation dimension as simply the manifest form of a buddha or as an exclusively pure vision. The absence of such multifarious concepts is here termed ignorance.

Knowing that everything manifests from one's own state that is the true greatness, and remaining in that condition, one may proclaim that there is no individual I; one may proclaim the greatness of one's state; one may enjoy one's self in all possible manifestations and say that everything is one's self: this is termed pride.

Those who have knowledge of the true state allow no space in themselves for the concept of differences among phenomena. They leave no room for the concept that attachment, anger, and ignorance exist with distinct characteristics. They exclude misconceptions about the true nature of reality. They leave no margin for not recognizing that all things are nothing but the state of the Sugata, or for ignorance of the fact that one's primordial state is liberation: this is termed jealousy.

Chapter 9: *The Unexcelled*

On the Sutra path of accumulation,[67] knowledge of the path to perfect enlightenment consists of the four close applications of mindfulness of body, mind, feeling, and mental phenomena. In the path of seeing, it consists of the seven branches of enlightenment: perfect presence, perfect discrimination, perfect effort, perfect joy, perfect suppleness, perfect meditative stability, and perfect equanimity. Moreover, in the path of meditation, the eight branches of the exalted ones: perfect view, perfect perception, perfect speech, perfect action, perfect livelihood, perfect effort, perfect presence, and perfect meditative stability, are applied. On the basis of the knowledge of these branches, one works to spiritually uplift all beings. Such knowledge, which is developed gradually, is the knowledge of the path of perfect enlightenment.[68]

In the beginning of this chapter, the Teacher addresses Vajrasattva, saying the very opposite of the above: that knowledge of the path to enlightenment is unborn in the individual and as such, does not need to be cultivated gradually, as

the individual already possesses the five wisdoms, here concealed under the term five aggregates.[69]

The lines that follow, many of which are also found in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti,* emphasize that all that exists is the emanation or *nirmanakaya* aspect of one's primordial state. This state is equated with a natural enlightenment that is also the lack of identity of things—or emptiness—the unborn reality devoid of birth and cessation. It is this emptiness, existing prior to anything else, that manifests as the variety of things of the universe and as the buddhas who liberate the beings who live in the six realms of existence. Being nonconceptual wisdom of the all-inclusive path, this single reality of the indivisibility of cyclic existence and its transcendence is never overwhelmed by any phenomena of cyclic existence.[70] Even the various forms of deities, and so on, found in the tantras, are this ineffable reality beyond form. It possesses the nature of the three dimensions, yet it is not present as any concrete characteristic. That which all buddhas have understood is this wisdom of pure awareness that exists in oneself as one's natural possession. All that is perceived and can be thought of manifests from that as one's enjoyment or, as in the often-quoted Dzogchen expression, as "an ornament of one's pure awareness." These lines of our text implicitly teach the conduct of Samantabhadra in which there is no need to accept or reject anything in our experience.

The Teacher, again addressing Vajrasattva, emphasizes that everything arises from one's self and that one's self is the wisdom of the Omniscient Ones. One's self is the dimension of reality, a precious inner space that is not confined even to the transcendence of attachment. When this principle is understood, one also knows that the seeds of cyclic existence and the stains of emotions never existed. This wisdom and the totality of its qualities are present without being sought, pervading all existence, without distinction between enlightened and unenlightened beings.

The Teacher then states that the Transcendent One or *tathagata* means "that which has the body of wisdom." This is also explained in the sutras of the Mahayana, but here the expression, "that which has the body of wisdom," indicates not a person, but the primordial state of each individual that possesses the five Body dimensions of the five families.

The immaculate light of this dimension of wisdom that, like space, is present everywhere is the building matter of the whole universe that presents itself to the perception of beings. This light is the light of the colors of the five elements constituting the seemingly concrete objects that are in reality nothing but the

Body dimensions of the five families, the five facets of the body of wisdom of our primordial state. From the dimension of wisdom that is the *dharmakaya*, through the dimension of perfect resources (*sambhogakaya*) representing the Voice and manifesting in the rays of the Voice as letters, the six buddhas of the six realms of existence appear as the dimension of emanation (*nirmanakaya*) to liberate beings according to their different capacities.

Thus, although the whole universe—the environment and beings—manifests clearly in space with its characteristic distinct forms, colors, light, and so on, none of this depends on material conditions. All is a miraculous manifestation of the energy of the Body, Voice, and Mind of the primordial state. It does not depend on anything, yet all that exists depends on it.

Why does this huge display that exists in one's self manifest? Just as one's feelings for the beloved are rekindled on being reunited with her, this manifestation occurs so that, by experiencing and recognizing its display as one's self, the pure awareness of one's primordial state is reawakened. Thus, dualistic illusion created by appearances collapses, and the display itself becomes the door to knowledge of the primordial self.

Chapter 10: *The Supreme Secret*

Here the primordial state is presented as the supreme secret. Why? Because all phenomena of the infinite universe are the creation or a manifestation of this primordial state that is enlightenment itself. This means that everything arises from the wisdom of one's own pure awareness. Since this is difficult to fathom by anyone, even by highly developed spiritual beings, it is said to be the supreme secret.

Chapter 11: *The Definitive Secret Instruction*

In the sutras, the five psycho-physical aggregates of the person—form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness—are considered to be contaminated results of emotions and past actions. As such, until they are abandoned, they always constitute a source of suffering. The tantras envision the possibility of transforming their impure aspects into their pure nature. Thus, once such transformation or purification is effected through the tantric methods, the five aggregates reveal themselves as the five male buddhas of the five families, and so on. Here however, the Teacher explains that the aggregates are not to be

conceived of as impure, for they have always been pure. In fact, form, that is, all that appears as material, is only one's self; feeling is the natural liberation that always occurs when, in the absence of grasping, something pleasant or unpleasant is encountered; perception of distinct phenomena is the unborn ultimate nature that manifests; volition is the freedom from conditioned reactions regardless of what appears to our senses; and consciousness is nothing but wisdom that appears in space.

The Body dimensions of the five male buddhas, and so on, of the five families—facets of pure awareness—are the very nature of the five aggregates. The essence of these Bodies is Vairocana, the wisdom of the expanse of the true nature of reality, whose light manifests primarily as the mandala of the dimension of perfect resources (*sambhogakaya*) sometimes depicted as a deity with four faces, one gazing in each direction. Such light represents the five colored lights that serve as the door to everything that exists. Thus Vairocana, as the Tibetan translation *rNam par snang mdzad* indicates, means "he who manifests form," and in this sense is equated with the consciousness ground of all or *alayavijnana*), the true nature of which is the primordial ground (*alaya*) from which everything appears, including the five Body dimensions of the buddhas of the five families. Thus, the five dimensions are the source of all that is, and consequently, everything is already in the state of perfect enlightenment.

This Body dimension is not the Body of the Teacher proclaiming the tantra—as it may appear to be from the expression "my Body" found in the text—but the primordial state of each individual that has always existed and always transmutes itself in every possible way. From its five facets originate the five elements and from these, the entire universe. Thus, all the infinite universes are the primordial state that is perfect and total enlightenment.

The levels of spiritual realization, the attainment of enlightenment, and all aspects of the spiritual path including the correct view, conduct, and so on; the Teaching that is taught and heard, as well as the teacher, students, and so forth, are all just this—the marvelous secret—the primordial state of each individual.

Sentient beings, their actions that lead to birth in cyclic existence, the sense objects, emotions, suffering, the worlds in which sentient beings live, and so on, are the reality whose nature is bliss. When this reality is not recognized, all these phenomena, although nonexistent, appear. When this reality is recognized, this entire illusory display arising from one's self vanishes like mist at sunrise. As all the worlds and their inhabitants spontaneously manifest as wisdom, there is no need to search for an ideal place of meditation.

Chapter 12: *Body, Voice, and Mind Beyond Seeking*

This chapter explains that the primordial state is present in each sentient being and does not need to be sought. The Teacher states that just as a jewel is always a jewel, the Body dimension of the primordial state remains unaltered in its nature, regardless of the aspect (good or bad, high or low, pleasurable or disagreeable, and so on) of its transformation. This jewel-like primordial state cannot be comprehended through the pathways of the intellect for, as the path to the absolute, it can be actualized only through experiential meditation.

Everything that appears to ordinary perception, such as color, form, shape, sense objects, and so on, is comprised in one's own wisdom dimension. Thus, there is no distinction between bad things and good things. Like gold, regardless of whether it is cast into a sacred image or into the image of a demon, its nature is unchanged: it always remains gold.

Although it is the wisdom dimension that manifests as all phenomena, because of the habitual tendencies created by our past actions, that which appears can be experienced as the impure vision of cyclic existence or as pure liberated vision. Because of this, the text states, "The wisdom dimension is the variety of forms originating from the mind."

Speaking of the enlightened mind that we all possess, the Teacher explains that such a primordial Mind has the indivisible and indestructible nature of the eight wisdoms. This nondual reality arises from the dimension of the wisdom of one's own pure awareness. The eight wisdoms may refer to the eight groups of consciousness, namely, the consciousness ground of all, the mental consciousness, the afflicted consciousness, and the five sense consciousnesses.

All the world systems of the universe arise from this primordial Mind that encompasses all that exists. Since this primordial Mind is indestructible and never disappears, the infinite world systems will manifest continuously in a never-ending display.

All the world systems are just Body, Voice, and Mind, the three facets of one's primordial state. Thus, nothing can be termed the infinite universe apart from Mind, which has existed from the beginning and which is inseparable from Body and Voice. In the triad of Body, Voice, and Mind, Mind is emptiness, which is the source; Body is the luminosity of all manifestations; and Voice is all sound.

The meaning of Body, Voice, and Mind is not limited to the physical body,

the sound of the voice, and the subjective mind of an individual, but represents the three-faceted nature of reality that pervades the relative appearance of the universe and beings. To indicate that these three are an inseparable, single reality, the Teacher says: “Body and Mind are also the Voice. Voice and Mind are also Body.” Moreover, transposing the usual Voice/*sambhogakaya*, Body/*nirmanakaya*, and Mind/*dharmakaya* pairings, here it is said that Voice is the *nirmanakaya*, Body is the *sambhogakaya*, and Mind is the very essence of enlightenment.

Although it is a single, indivisible reality, when seen from a different perspective, the primordial state is the empty reality (*dharmakaya*) in which everything is one’s self, primordially perfected as the triad of enlightened Body, Voice, and Mind.

Because of its characteristics, one’s self comprises all five kayas of enlightenment. That is, being unchanging, one’s self cannot be developed in any way by the accumulation of merit: thus, one’s unchanging nature represents the dimension of perfected merit. Perfect from the very beginning, one’s self need not strive to accomplish a supreme, emanated form: thus, one’s primordial perfection represents the dimension of emanation, the *nirmanakaya*. Spontaneously perfected in all qualities, one’s self need not create the causes for the five certainties of teacher, teaching, place, audience, and time: thus, one’s spontaneous perfection represents the dimension of perfect resources, the *sambhogakaya*. Beyond action and seeking, one’s self need not quest for enlightenment: thus, it is the dimension that is the essence of enlightenment, the *dharmakaya*.

In brief, the enlightened Body, Voice, and Mind, and the Body dimensions of the Buddha that in the Mahayana path are said to be attainable only at the culmination of the spiritual path, in *The Marvelous Primordial State* are explained as qualities possessed by one’s self from the very beginning, without having to strive for them. Thus, enlightened Body, Voice, and Mind are not exclusive qualities of *nirmanakaya* buddhas like Buddha Shakyamuni, but are present as the basic condition of all beings.

Chapter 13: *Behavior and Activity*

As mentioned above, when recognized as the surging energy of one’s self, thoughts rooted in attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, or jealousy do not block one’s energy and naturally liberate in their own condition. When such natural

liberation occurs, the emotions manifest as the five natural wisdoms, and enactment of these emotions comprises the extraordinary behavior of spiritual practitioners who abide in the knowledge of their primordial state. Hence, this chapter informs us that the five emotions ". . . are the great Vajrayana itself." Here, Vajrayana broadly refers to the praxis of the path of Tantra, but specifically to Dzogchen Atiyoga.

In the Sutra path of the Hinayana, lay practitioners abide by the precepts associated with taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha; by the four root vows to abstain from killing, stealing, adultery, and lying, and often, by a vow to abstain from taking intoxicants. Monks in particular maintain the four root vows to abstain from sexual intercourse, stealing, killing, and lying about their spiritual attainments. If a monk were to break one of these vows and conceal the transgression even for a moment, his status as a monk would be totally compromised, and his breach of discipline irreparable. Many other vows prescribed by the monastic code of discipline, such as not eating after mid-day, begging for one's food, and so on, are concerned with disciplining the behavior of the body for the purpose of avoiding circumstances in which emotions might flourish.

The Mahayana path of the bodhisattva is based on an altruistic aspiration to attain enlightenment. Intention is the determining factor as to whether one should engage in or refrain from a given action. At times, an action, even a transgression of a monastic rule that would not be admissible for a follower of the Hinayana, is here permitted, provided that the intention is to benefit others definitively out of genuine love and compassion. Bodhisattvas should nurture love for sentient beings and maintain many other commitments related to the altruistic resolve to attain enlightenment that constitutes the essence of their spiritual path. Certain types of behavior and mental attitudes, called training, are based on prescribed rules regarding acts considered reprehensible and thus to be avoided, and acts considered worthy and thus to be adopted in the spirit of altruism.

Mantric pledges are essentially the resolve to train in the methods for experiencing blissful wisdom in order to dissolve clinging to the dualistic view of subject and object and to overcome the propensities to stray from that blissful wisdom. This resolve is assumed during the course of tantric initiation. In this regard, the lower tantras of Kriya, Ubhaya, and Yogatantra prescribe a myriad of rules of behavior to be followed, both general and specific, associated with the various Buddha families. These include many of the Mahayana forms of

conduct, as well as some of the Hinayana rules of behavior.

In the highest tantras, one abides in particular by fourteen main commitments: not to disrespect the spiritual master, not to transgress the Teaching of the Buddha, not to be angry at spiritual companions, not to abandon compassion, not to release one's semen that is the basis of bliss, not to disparage one's own and other spiritual traditions, not to disclose tantric secrets to the immature, not to abuse one's own body, not to deny the relative truth, not to love the wicked, not to conceptualize the ultimate reality, not to cause believers to lose faith, not to refuse sacred substances, and not to disrespect women. Moreover, vows and pledges related to the meditation phases of creation and completion and those that have multi-layered meanings (outer, inner, and secret) related to the five families must also be preserved. Each tantra has its specific way of presenting these vows. For example, the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* presents four pledges that require some deciphering:

One who ends life,
Who delights in lying,
Who covets the wealth of others,
Or who constantly engages in sexual union. . .

For yogins in the completion phase, these are explained as follows:

To end life means to seal the energy wind in the central channel,
To lie means to impart teachings while understanding that everything is unreal,
To steal means to realize the Buddha's wisdom by relying on a consort,
To indulge in sexual union means to experience the very nature of reality.

Similar forms of behavior are also set forth in this chapter of our text. Overall, the Teacher presents a type of behavior and activity totally beyond virtue and wrongdoing, beyond the notions of pure and impure, and so on. All that is normally divided into actions to be abandoned and actions to be adopted according to dualistic concepts is at root a single reality in the light of one's pure unborn awareness. When one possesses the knowledge that one's self is pure from the beginning and that it undergoes no change or modification because of virtuous or evil actions, no action can generate conflict or habitual tendencies. For this reason, Dzogchen practitioners, governed by the knowledge of the

unborn essence of mind, may perform any action required by the circumstances, without the limitations imposed by the acceptance of some actions and rejection of others. This is known as the conduct that is Always Good.[71] However, for one who has no such knowledge and whose acts are instigated by emotions, such conduct can greatly impede the path to realization.

The nature of these types of behavior and activity is connected to one's own primordial state that always exists as bliss and clarity. Thus, if one's self is recognized as the essence of enlightenment, this knowledge permits the enjoyment of everything as an offering to one's self. There is no need to intentionally make offerings to a physical Buddha or to show reverence to a preferred meditational deity as is done by followers of Tantra. Moreover, unlike the contexts of the highest tantras, the enactment of this kind of behavior and activity is not a method for awakening but an expression of the knowledge that one is always in a condition of enlightenment. It is a conduct in which nothing is done with the intention of attaining a goal, yet that which is to be done is not set aside.

Then, the Teacher addresses Vajrasattva with awe-inspiring arguments that validate the application of the behavior and activity just explained. He states that, beyond the concepts of existence and nonexistence, the primordial state of each individual is the ultimate condition in which we always find ourselves, regardless of our circumstances.

Recognition of the primordial state is the way to shatter the storehouse of habitual tendencies that confused beings create through ignorance that grasps things as real. The confusion and obstacles we experience arise from lack of that recognition; only through this knowledge is delusion overcome without being intentionally abandoned.

The Teacher states that the fire, water, and wind that in turn destroy the world at the end of the cosmic era of abiding are nothing but the primordial state itself that terrifies and destroys both the animate and inanimate world.

The Teacher exhorts Vajrasattva to bow down to the one who has ". . . devoured all buddhas," and who, still unsatiated, will devour all sentient beings as well. By this statement we understand that all exists and manifests in the total self. The buddhas have understood the principle of the primordial state; thus they have been devoured by it. Sentient beings have yet to understand it; thus they have yet to be devoured. But both enlightened beings and sentient beings have always been included in the total self.

This state cannot be conceived or named in any way, not even as the Always

Good, for it causes the death and birth of countless beings. All names that can be given to it are just signs of a reality beyond examples, indications provided to lead the ignorant to a knowledge of reality.

In brief, one's self in which all attainments are already complete from the beginning is the only reality on which to meditate, the only deity to worship, and the only object to which to make offerings. The Teacher says that there is no need to emit the semen as an offering to the deities as is done in tantric practices.[72] For the wise, the real semen is one's self, and to always emit the semen means to generate the knowledge of the primordial state through union with one's self, not with a consort. This exemplifies behavior in the Dzogchen praxis, whose nature, like space, is unlimited and unobstructed.

Chapter 14: *The Marvelous Secret*

This chapter begins with an expansion of the topic of behavior discussed in the previous chapter, reinterpreting the modes of tantric conduct in the light of the Dzogchen view. The Teacher says that there is no need to transform one's self into a deity through imagination, as done in tantric practice. When one's body is metaphorically adorned by the real semen—the knowledge of the primordial state—seeing one's body is like seeing a buddha, and the entire universe comes under one's power: one perceives the universe as an ornament of one's own pure awareness.

The wisdom deity or *jnanasattva* that in tantric praxis is invited from the realm of space to merge with oneself visualized as a deity—the so-called commitment being or *samayasattva*—in order to overcome the concept that one's self and the deity are different is here not to be found externally. The Teacher declares that, "My body" (one's self) is the true deity that dwells within the temple of the body. This alone is the deity that, when recognized, grants all *siddhis* and enlightenment.

Moreover, there is no need to meditate on the Voice and the Mind of a deity as symbols in order to approach the divine state of Voice and Mind, for ordinary voice and thoughts in themselves are symbols of the ultimate meaning of deity, that is, the primordial state. Ordinary behavior of any type whatsoever is already the enlightened activity of the emanation body of an enlightened being manifestly present in the world. Thus, ordinary and supreme *siddhis* are not to be requested from an outer deity; they come from one's self and are immediate. Enlightenment is not a goal to be attained in the distant future.

The body and voice of each individual are of an inseparable sameness that is the very essence of the Secret Mantra and, like the sky, they do not have any inherent characteristics. The mind that contemplates has no identity whatsoever; thus, since the contemplation of the deity and the secret mantras have no reality, how could they be reference points for the discovery of the primordial state?

Yet it is as transformations of the inseparable sameness of body, voice, and mind that mandalas, signs of spiritual realization, and all phenomena of existence appear. These infinite transformations are one's own primordial state manifesting enlightenment as bliss, regardless of the place and time in which one finds one's self embodied.

The Teacher explains that when one abides in the knowledge of enlightenment that is one's self, primordial purity or emptiness, the nature of this state, is not conceptually objectified in any way, for in this seeing, duality is totally absent. Basically this means that one has no notion of emptiness and likewise no notion of an enlightenment to be attained; one has no notion of existence, for all things conceived of as existent are in reality nonexistent. Whatever thought arises is wisdom: the clear awareness in which there is nothing to purify or discard. Being unaffected by concepts and veils, this pure awareness does not contain the notion of modifying that which is occurring within and without.

Mind creates the illusion of the duality of externally existing entities and an internally existing consciousness that apprehends them. This dualistic working of the mind is absent in the true nature of reality. Nevertheless, the conceptual mind that surges in the space of the true nature of reality is not in any way different from that nature; it is perfect as an expression of one's primordial state that is enlightenment.

This section of our text thus again sets forth the principle of meditation in Ati Dzogchen. Once the view has been understood, the view and the meditator are experienced as inseparable. The mind is left as it is, without being purposefully placed in a particular state. One remains without the feeling of the duality of one's self and others, neither hoping for a luminous wisdom to arise nor fearing the mental fabrications stemming from one's perceptions and vision.

Since each living being is already the wisdom deity abiding in the most secret mandala indivisible from one's self, there is no need to follow the tantric practice of visualizing oneself as the deity and merging it with the wisdom deity invoked from space. The elements of one's body and of the world that arise from the primordial state and not from anything else are themselves the deities of the

real mandala, spontaneously present without artful creation in colored sand or imaginative visualization. All the abilities and all the realization that could be wished for in a tantric deity are already present as the inherent wealth of one's self.

In a conclusive statement, the Teacher explains that the self-originated wisdom quality of pure awareness is not acquired through effort, but is naturally present in each living being since the very beginning, and thus is not to be found in scriptures or through study of the limited aspects of existence. As it does not dwell in the dimension of time, it is not connected to past, present, or future. With this knowledge, one is never separated from the condition of the transcendent wisdom or *prajnaparamita*.

Such wisdom—the indivisible reality that manifests everything in the universe, and which is therefore known as Vairocana—cannot be expressed in words, for it is present as the natural clarity of the mind essence of each living being. Yet it is indicated by *A*, the progenitor of all letters, said to be supreme among letters. Likewise, as stated by Garab Dorje in his *Commentary on the Manjushrinamasamgiti*:[73]

> "*A* is supreme among all letters" means that just as the letter *A* is the essence of all letters, pure awareness is superior to the five wisdoms and the [five] elements. [But] "It is the sublime letter of total reality" means that unlike the letter *A* or the words and letters that depend on it, pure awareness is the indivisible, self-originated dimension of reality that is naturally pure. For example, the letter *A* comes from within and is like the abode of other letters; thus, it is a self-originated sound. Being self-originated, it is unborn. Likewise, the phenomena of cyclic existence and its transcendence arise from the [primordial state,] yet that base has no causes and conditions and is therefore self-originated; thus, it is without birth.

In brief, the entirety of cyclic existence and its transcendence are the energy of wisdom.

Chapter 15: *The Definitive Crucial Teaching*

Here the Teacher presents the ultimate message, the crucial points of the teaching, and the definitive instruction. The ultimate message tells us, as explained above, that enlightened and unenlightened beings as well as the infinite universe are aspects of Body, Voice, and Mind that are the three facets of the primordial state. Their unalterable indivisibility is referred to as

indestructible nature or *vajra*. For the same reason, the tantras speak of indestructible phenomena or *vajradharma*, and of the path called the indestructible way, the Vajrayana.

The crucial points of the teaching consist of meditation in which a difference between oneself and the divine is not felt. It is a state within which the nature of phenomena and of one's self, the view, the tantras that communicate the state of Vajrasattva's Mind, its nature, qualities, manifestations, behavior, and the integration of it all, have to be directly understood beyond scriptural and theoretical knowledge.

The definitive instruction consists of the fact that just as waves arise from the ocean, exist as the ocean, and subside in the ocean, all things originate from one's self, exist as one's self, and dissolve in one's self. Without renouncing anything, enjoying the creations of one's state, one meets the true condition, thus openly revealed as the all-inclusive reality.

Chapter 16: *The Secret Marvelous Mandala*

In the highest tantras, the mandala denotes, in a general way, the deities whose nature is compassion and wisdom gathered in the divine mansion that is their wisdom environment. The initiation that empowers the practitioner to engage in the phases of creation and completion is conferred in this mandala. In the meaning of the term, *manda* means essence and *la*, to capture, thus, "to capture the essence." The essence is the total bliss that is the indivisibility of emptiness and compassion. Such indivisibility is the progenitor of all mandalas and embodies all forms of deities.[74] From this perspective, the mandala in the Mind series of Dzogchen does not differ from that in the highest tantras, but the means to achieve this understanding does differ. In Tantra, to understand the mandala essence one must first receive an initiation and then create the mandala in the imagination as the secret abode of the deity. In such a praxis, one re-creates the universe as a divine mansion in the center of which one is born as the deity. Visualizing one's self as the deity helps one to overcome the grasping to ordinary impure vision while feeling the dignity of being a deity helps one to overcome the ordinary sense of I. In this way one discovers that the ordinary perception of the world and of one's self as concrete and real is in fact an illusion. Thus, to effect the tantric transformation, one must replace in one's imagination the field of experience of the ordinary consciousness and senses with a field of pure perceptual experience.

In our text it is explained that such a visualized transformation need not be effected, for in reality the ordinary eight classes of consciousness that comprise the mind of the person, the senses, as well as their objects, are already a pure and marvelous mandala that is naturally present in each sentient being. All these aspects arise and manifest from the clarity of one's wisdom, the mandala of essence where all tantric secrets are as one.

In the sphere of this mandala of wisdom, the eight consciousnesses and the senses are the so-called wisdom deities. The five sense-consciousnesses are the doorways through which knowledge, qualities, and activities are expressed.

This mandala of the mind essence manifesting in the sense-consciousnesses is the wheel of the great accumulation of wisdom and merit[75] that has always been present. Since they are the radiance of the mind essence devoid of any concrete form, the consciousnesses, the senses, and their objects as the deities of this mandala are not deities with specific forms and attributes appearing through an imaginative process, but are the deities of the mind.

Ending this chapter on a cryptic note, our text states that in this mandala, the ordinary voice, body, and mind are associated with the Body, the path, and the domain of the three times. This may be understood in the following way: in the sense in which it is sound that is the origin of everything, voice is the Body, path, and domain of the past. In the sense in which it manifests in the present, the physical body is the Body, path, and domain of the present. In the sense in which it represents the sphere from which everything unfolds, mind is the Body, path, and domain of the future.

Chapter 17: *The Marvelous Mandala of Total Bliss*

Having basically refuted the conventional meaning of mandala as set forth in the tantras in the previous chapter, here our text presents in depth the true meaning of the mandala.

The ordinary mind is in no way different from the natural condition of the ground of being. This is the real knowledge possessed by realized beings. In the true nature of reality that is the wisdom quality of pure awareness, the notion of I formed through habitual tendencies does not arise. Moreover, this reality is indivisible from the three dimensions of enlightenment. In the true nature of reality, immovable and pure by nature, there is no progression on a spiritual path through purification and improvement. For this reason, a spiritual path involving progression and purification is a term for something that does not exist.

Since all that is experienced through the senses is the energy manifestation of the primordial state, all experience is comparable to an ornament that adorns one's self, which is neither to be discarded nor made an object of attachment. Even the negative emotions, when recognized as part of one's true nature, manifest as the wisdom of enlightenment, inseparable from Body, Voice, and Mind.

Yet, when negative emotions are not recognized in this way, beings suffer endlessly in the cycle of lives. Beings can only effectively liberate themselves when they gain and abide in the knowledge of their primordial state; apart from that, there is no spiritual path. Thus, such knowledge is the only way to liberation.

The Teacher refers to the five main emotions—attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy—as offerings. In the tantras, offerings are customarily presented to the deities in order to please them, but here emotions themselves are viewed as spontaneous offerings made by one's self to one's self. Free of the need to overcome them, one recognizes the five main emotions as having the characteristics of the five wisdoms. The adjective great is affixed to each of the emotions because, once recognized as wisdom, they do not provoke the duality they would usually generate; thus, nonduality becomes the source of unadulterated joy. Freed from dualism, these emotions are total bliss.[76]

Emotions recognized as wisdom cannot become seeds of birth in the six realms of cyclic existence. To those who are hesitant to make use of the emotions, fearing rebirth as a denizen of hell, the Teacher says that hell has never existed as a concrete place and is only an apparition in which the compassionate energy of the Enlightened Ones manifests itself. As such, hell has neither cause nor reality.

All phenomena that appear to the consciousness are one's primordial state; in reality, they never came into existence, nor will they ever come into existence as something separate from one's self. This truth also characterizes the fundamental sameness of enlightened and unenlightened beings: they do not exist, yet they appear; they exist, yet they do not exist. Moreover, no pure land is to be found outside the world in which one lives. In truth, everything included in cyclic existence and in its transcendence, is a great mandala in which the true nature of reality arises as blissful visions. Thus, the clarity or wisdom of such a state that is the very nature of the mind of each being is not within the range of rational thought, but is hidden away in the mind as the highest and most secret bliss.

Chapter 18: *The Marvelous Mandala*

In this chapter, whose title closely resembles those of the two preceding chapters, the Teacher says that the knowledge and realization of perfect enlightenment is inherent in the primordial state of each living being. This knowledge embodies the compassionate energy that cares for all sentient beings as a mother cares for her only child and is therefore not free of attachment. Since the knowledge that gives rise to it realizes that the true nature of reality is like space and is beyond attachment, this attachment does not grasp at a concrete reality. Since it entertains neither a concept of existence nor of inexistence, it dwells in ultimate reality.

The Teacher says, moreover, that this knowledge is fully aware that the psychophysical aggregates of the person, although they appear, are actually illusory. This is because, as stated above, all phenomena have never been born. As it is a knowledge that can never turn into a condition of unenlightenment, it is inalienable, dwelling on a spiritual path whose nature is immutable, without start or finish. Fully aware that nothing exists with a nature of its own, such knowledge is in itself the spiritual path embodied in the lack of inherent nature.

The Teacher continues that the essence of mind, upon introspective examination, is found not to consist of a particular entity and thus is spoken of as unborn. How can ignorance dwell in an unborn mind? Consequently, no habitual tendencies stemming from ignorance and the other emotions can create seeds for the birth of unenlightened beings in cyclic existence. Always abiding as is—that is, changelessly—the mind essence of each living being does not pass from cyclic existence (samsara) into the transcendence of suffering (nirvana). How then can one speak of a spiritual path that leads beyond cyclic existence?

Since everything has the nature of one’s own body, voice, and mind, objects perceived by consciousness do not truly exist in the dualistic manner of their appearance. Thus, given the fact that no ordinary beings exist, it is logical to state that no enlightened beings exist either, for no shift from ordinary being to enlightened being ever takes place.

In brief, one who has direct knowledge of the primordial state does not tread a spiritual path to enlightenment. Since direct knowledge is untouched by the problems of cyclic existence, one is already at the gate of liberation. This is the essence of the mandala.

The text then depicts a cloud of buddhas who, gathered before the Teacher, the Great Vairocana, praise him for stating that he has proclaimed that there is

no need to tread a gradual path, for spiritual practitioners acquainted from the very beginning with the profound meaning of mandala already stand at the very core of enlightenment.

After this statement, the buddhas request the Teacher to recount the deeds of the buddhas of the three times. Usually such deeds refer, for example, to the twelve deeds of a supreme emanation of an enlightened being cited in the Mahayana: descending from Tushita heaven, entering the mother's womb, taking birth, becoming skilled in worldly arts and demonstrating physical prowess, enjoying a retinue of queens, renouncing the world, practicing austerities and ultimately giving them up, approaching the tree of enlightenment, defeating demonic forces, attaining total enlightenment, turning the wheel of the Teaching, and departing for the ultimate peace of nirvana.

Yet here the Teacher does not mention the deeds ascribed to the buddhas, but in an apparent 180 degree reversal, he proceeds to extol the qualities of the primordial state that is beyond action and deeds. The pure awareness of one's primordial state, he says, is the ultimate medicine, and when such awareness expands, the continuity of the illusory manifestation of cyclic existence ceases and one reawakens in a condition permeated by immutable bliss. Regardless of the spiritual path followed, in the absence of this universal path of nonaction, one will remain mired in inconclusive efforts.

Although the primordial state is the very nature of the individual, if not recognized, it is like a treasure buried beneath the house of a pauper: it is present, but of no utility. Once awareness of this state is awakened, one comes to possess a marvelous jewel that is the real mandala and the secret of all enlightened beings. There is no need to tread the bodhisattvas' ten levels of realization, for these are one within the primordial state. There is no need to implement the various secret methods taught in the tantras, for the knowledge of one's self is the great yoga that encompasses the purposes and results of all secret tantric methods.

When the real meaning of mandala is understood, mantras and familiarization with a tantric deity are superfluous, nor is there need to give rise to the mind of awakening (*bodhicitta*) in its two aspects—relative and ultimate—through visualization and rituals, for the actual mind of awakening is one's primordial state that is a natural possession from the very beginning. To invite the so-called wisdom deity from elsewhere to merge with oneself, as is done in tantric practice, is also irrelevant, as it is irrelevant to make offerings to such a deity in the belief that he or she can grant attainments. This is so because once one's self

—the unsurpassable reality—has been embraced, wisdom is known to be self-originated and the clarity of that wisdom is seen to be the source, the nature, of all tantric deities and of any attainments they might confer.

Thus, in brief, the primordial state that is the nature of all enlightened and unenlightened beings is said to be the very essence of the mandala conceived by the realized ones. This primordial mandala also reveals the conduct of spontaneous perfection: throughout the entire universe the varied, countless actions and activities of sentient beings are the activity of the enlightened beings; thus, all forms of conduct are perfect.

Chapter 19: *Meditation*

Here the Teacher explains that there is nothing about one's own natural condition, just as it is, that needs to be purified or improved through meditation. Yet, because sentient beings lack such understanding, they see their perceptual field as the ordinary universe. Once the perceptual field is understood to be the naturally pure manifestation of one's own potential, the concept of an impure perceptual field spontaneously vanishes without being rejected. Now experienced in the absence of duality, the world in which one lives manifests clearly as the spontaneously present primordial state, like a wish-fulfilling precious gem.

Awestruck upon hearing the words of the Teacher, Vajrasattva utters words of praise in his honor. Finally, Vajrasattva states that if one has a firsthand experience of the primordial state through one's own pure awareness, one need not search for anything else. This state is the total bliss of one's self, a bliss devoid of complacency and all other dualistic workings of the mind; it is the Buddha itself.

In the Sutra path, enlightenment can be attained only after one has purified the habitual tendencies created by past actions as well as the emotions motivating these actions and has gathered the two accumulations (merit and wisdom) over countless eons. In contrast, the Teacher says that none of this is necessary, since if we recognize the primordial state that has never been defiled by habitual tendencies and is spontaneously perfect, instant realization is ours.

When following the path of Tantra, in order to recognize one's divine nature, one visualizes an enlightened deity, invites the deity, performs symbolic gestures, makes offerings, recites mantras, and so on. In order to bring this process to its final result, one must adhere to commitments. If the commitments

are violated, the spiritual practice deteriorates and no conclusive result is attained. Here, instead of worshiping a tantric deity, one should know one's self, the very essence of enlightenment. Thus, there is no risk that the spiritual practice will deteriorate, for everything one does fulfills the function of tantric symbols. Since visualization of a deity, recitation of mantras, and performance of symbolic gestures are all naturally embraced and transcended in one's natural condition, there is no importance given to such practices.

The lines that follow explain the same principle, that meditation in Dzogchen is an objectless state of pure awareness, the real self, with no need for a support. This alone is the source of all imaginable qualities. This alone is the highest mandala.

Summing up, the Teacher proclaims that the spiritual ways—Hinayana, Mahayana, and Tantrayana—taught in accordance with the different capacities of beings and the liberation attained thereby are nothing but the most extraordinary immaterial wisdom of pure awareness that is the single spiritual way.[77]

Chapter 20: *The Marvelous Bliss of the Supreme Secret*

Here the Teacher launches into a comparison of the pure awareness of the primordial state with a panacea for happiness and good health. All that manifests from the potential of the primordial state, however it may be experienced, always possesses the nature of bliss.

He explains that although phenomena have never been born, their magical illusions that perform different functions are, from the beginning, the mandalas of the five enlightened families.

According to Tantra, once the five aggregates are gradually cleansed through tantric praxis, particularly through the experience of total bliss, enlightenment is achieved in which the individual's five aggregates become the male buddhas of the five families; the five elements become the five female buddhas; the four sense-consciousnesses and the four senses become the eight bodhisattvas; the four sense objects and the four times become the four female bodhisattvas; bodily sensation, contact, its object, and consciousness become the four wrathful male gatekeepers; the four views of eternalism, nihilism, of the I, and of concrete characteristics become the four wrathful female gatekeepers, and so on.

The Teacher explains to Vajrasattva that tantric practice need not be followed, for the five aggregates are already the perfect mandala of the five families, not

the result of purification or transformation attained through pursuit of the tantric path. The aggregate of form is already the perfect mandala of the Transcendent family of Vairocana; the aggregate of feeling is already the perfect mandala of the Jewel family of Ratnasambhava; the aggregate of perception is already the perfect mandala of the Lotus family of Amitabha; the aggregate of volitions is already the perfect mandala of the Action family of Amoghasiddhi, and the aggregate of consciousness is already the perfect mandala of the Vajra family of Akshobhya. Each of these mandalas is naturally endowed with the dimension, the aspect of the primordial state, the mudra or symbolic gesture, and the level of realization that characterizes it.

These five mandalas are not gradually constructed through visualization as in the tantras, but are fully present in each of the infinite beings of the universe, as well as in all realized beings. Since they are the primordial state itself, the five mandalas are everything: the view, enlightenment, Body, Voice, and Mind, time, space, and the universe.

Chapter 21: *The Total Bliss of the Supreme Secret*

Here the Teacher explains that since all is the mandala of the primordial state, all sentient beings are enlightened. Phenomena and their true nature are nothing other than the primordial state. All that exists is the self-originated mandala of one's wisdom. This means that since all phenomena included in the categories of self and others are the wisdom of pure awareness, they are naturally luminous from the very beginning. Such wisdom is ineffable and cannot even be apprehended through such concepts as total self or state. This mandala can be understood only through the direct experience of one's own pure awareness, and when this occurs all is seen as a spontaneous and perfect five-faceted mandala.

This innermost teaching is proclaimed because the knowledge of the primordial state—like a sharp knife, a well-tempered sword blade, a radiant path of light, or an immaculate lotus—can instantly liberate beings from their misery and their negative actions and grant them instantaneous enlightenment. This is because once the primordial state has been recognized, one realizes that even the so-called obscurations due to past actions and the accumulation of merit and wisdom are, respectively, already purified and already completed. There is no need to purify past deeds because these are one's original state, enlightened and beyond limitations. Consequently, there is also no need to intentionally gather merit. This part of our text again implicitly points out the behavior that applies

no effort in accepting or rejecting. Since all one's action is perfect conduct, there is nothing to be intentionally done with body, voice, or mind, and whatever one does, does not bind one to cyclic existence.

Moreover, everything considered as the supreme refuge—including the master, his teaching, and the community of spiritual practitioners—is inherent in this state: a spontaneously present reality beyond identifiable characteristics. In fact, this state is the single existent reality in the universe that manifests as bliss, and in this bliss, nothing that is not one's self exists. This means that although phenomena are perceived variously by ordinary folk because of our mental fabrications and habitual tendencies, in the all-encompassing reality free from these limitations, such variations are not present. Therefore one speaks of a single existent reality.

To say that this principle is understood through pure awareness does not imply that it is different from one's self, for it is the very nature of one's self. It is discovered not through analysis but through direct observation, when the movement of constructing thoughts comes to an end. With no concrete realms of existence, that is, with no duality of subject and object, one's mind and the expanse of reality exist as the unique reality.

Chapter 22: *The Marvelous View*

This chapter starts in an unusual way, with the Teacher saying, "Listen, friends," without explicitly identifying to whom he is speaking. Despite its title, here the Teacher does not offer a philosophically derived view of the nature of ultimate truth. He neither sets forth reasoning to prove a point of view as is common in the philosophical systems, nor does he prescribe a meditation or behavior based upon a viewpoint. This unconventional treatment of the theme of the philosophical view implies the futility of establishing a view through analysis and reasoning. The true condition of living beings and phenomena is beyond the grasp of concepts. This condition itself represents the view. For this reason the Teacher emphasizes again that one's primordial state is the actual enlightenment, the only one there is. When one lives in such knowledge, even the hell realms, the executors of the unfailing laws of karma who inflict suffering on the hell-beings, and the fire that entirely engulfs that dimension are experienced as the energy of one's primordial state; thus, one comes to no harm.

Because all that exists is one's self whose nature is enlightenment, there is no need to apply any concept-based yoga. No spiritual path need be followed; no

enlightenment seen as the culmination of a spiritual journey need be sought. In reality there exist neither sentient beings nor cyclic existence said to be generated by habitual tendencies created by deep-seated emotions. Consequently, one need neither fear sinking into the swamp of cyclic existence nor long for the achievement of a blissful spiritual goal. No action whatsoever —such as applying a spiritual practice or renouncing one behavior and adopting another—need be performed.

The final statements of this chapter imply that with regard to meditation, there is no need to act intentionally in order to overcome mental fixations, ways of thinking, or points of reference. Understanding these phenomena to be one's own self-originated wisdom, one does not even need to try to transcend the workings of one's mind. Even that which is generally considered an obstacle to meditation is not refuted. Mind itself, with no place to abide, is the primordial state that can never become an object of meditation.

Chapter 23: *Realization Without Effort*

This chapter begins with Vajrasattva expressing wonder that the extraordinary teaching being proclaimed had been grasped neither by himself nor by enlightened beings of the past. Vajrasattva highlights the singularity of this teaching, saying that unlike the doctrines expounded in the sutras and tantras, it teaches that all—the phenomenal as well as the noumenal—is the creative energy of the primordial state. Yet, at the same time it proclaims that the primordial state, in the sense that it is not an object of concepts, does not exist. It is a teaching that does not speak of misery, of cyclic existence, of hell, or of ignorance, and one in which the core of reality is not presented through a protracted provisional explanation, but is directly experienced.

Vajrasattva then asks the Teacher why a buddha is omniscient. The Teacher first replies by presenting what appears to be a perspective shared with the Mahayana teaching. A buddha is omniscient, the Teacher says, because he has gathered infinite merit, because he is the source of boundless qualities, because he has perfected countless skillful means and possesses wisdom, knowledge, boundless conduct, charisma to persuade the unknowing, and the ability to teach and act to benefit students according to their abilities.

Then the Teacher concisely presents two special practices taught in the tantras: union and liberation. In Tantra, union denotes sexual union with a qualified consort whereby the bliss derived from the melting of the seminal

essence is experienced simultaneously with emptiness. Liberation refers to compassionately releasing into a pure land the consciousness of persons who are addicted to evil deeds, thereby preventing them from committing further evils and being reborn in a lower form of existence. However, the Teacher reinterprets the meanings of these two practices in the light of Dzogchen. Union does not necessitate uniting with an external consort, for true union is recognition of the three aspects of the existence of the individual—body, voice, and mind—as one indivisible reality. Liberation does not necessitate the separation of an evildoer's mind from the body and shifting it to a pure realm, for the indivisible, indestructible reality of each individual does not abide anywhere within the confines of space and time. Thus, union and liberation are the understanding of these two principles.

The Teacher continues that the pure awareness of one's self is the transcendent knowledge, the truth that is directly taught in the Mahayana sutras. This is the essence as well as the source of all ten means of transcendence, the *paramitas)*: generosity, ethics, patience, diligence, meditation, knowledge, method, strength, aspiration, and wisdom. Because of the application of these ten, the Mahayana is also known as Way of the Means of Transcendence or *paramitayana*. Thus, pure awareness gives meaning to the spiritual practice of the means of transcendence as the path of the Mahayana.

The textual style of the *Mejung Tantra* is modeled after that of the Mahayana sutras, in which the Buddha is often depicted as entering into a particular contemplation before speaking. In our text, the Teacher, having entered the manifest contemplation, says that those who have realized the knowledge of the primordial state do not hold the concept that everything is enlightened or that there is an expanse of the true nature of reality: the primordial state itself—in which there is no concept—is enlightenment; it is the true nature of reality.

When applied to the view, meditation, and action, this principle implies that the view of reality cannot be approached by amassing theoretical knowledge and becoming an expert in all the philosophical systems, and that such an approach would not further one's training in meditation and conduct. Moreover, true meditation is unconnected to any form of training involving examination and analysis. Examination and analysis distance one's self from recognition of the primordial state by introducing concepts and effort into a dimension in which they are absent. Thus, with nothing in which to train and without the wish to realize enlightenment, there is instant enlightenment.

Chapter 24: *All Qualities Are Perfected in the Body*

Here it is explained that the real means of transcendence are not the ones cultivated gradually, but those that are already perfected in one's self, since all qualities are already perfected in one's self. There is no entrance that leads to them and no expression that can define them. They are transcendent knowledge encompassing all that exists; they manifest instantly.

One who understands this also knows that all phenomena have always been in a state of perfection. Therefore, no distinction need be made between conduct to be cultivated and conduct to be relinquished, not even in relation to deviations or obscurations. Instead, the text speaks of enjoying or integrating the full variety of phenomena in the total sameness of one's self beyond duality, while knowing all phenomena as clearly as a well-defined pattern on fine cloth.

Such yogins know that, outside themselves, no meditational deity exists; thus they do not depend on deities, methods, paths, and so on. The primordial state, so hard to find, is the very dimension of the buddhas, and the pure awareness that is recognition of this, the buddha state itself, is not to be found elsewhere.

Chapter 25: *Commitments*

As mentioned above, in order to effect the final result of the path of Tantra, after receiving an initiation, the practitioner must abide by specific vows and pledges reflecting the nature of the various practices and modes of conduct. Contrary to this, this chapter speaks of commitments in which there is nothing to observe or to maintain. Here, commitments refers to the primordial state itself in its eight different facets: primordially unborn, nonarisen, nonabiding, empty, nonexistent, all-pervasive, single, and spontaneously present. These facets represent the fact that nothing can be definitively stated regarding phenomena that are the energy-manifestation of one's self. They have no birth or death; they exist, yet they do not exist. Phenomena do not move anywhere; they exist, yet they do not exist. Phenomena do not abide anywhere; they abide, yet they do not abide. All phenomena are empty; they exist, yet they do not exist. In brief, no ascertainable characteristics can be detected anywhere.

With regard to such commitments, there is nothing to observe because the primordial state that is the absence of ascertainable characteristics is utterly inseparable from one's self, and thus cannot be transgressed or lost in any way. Thus, the commitments are always fulfilled by remaining effortlessly in the

natural condition without any attempt to modify this by following a specific practice or conforming to a particular behavior.

The highest tantras present various sets of commitments to be honored, such as those related to Body, Voice, and Mind. Referring to this set as an example, our text states that no commitments need be kept in relation to Body, Voice, and Mind. Why? Because Mind, Voice, and Body are facets of one's primordial state that is all-knowing, is all-inclusive, and in which all is perfect, respectively. Since all commitments are already fulfilled in these three, there is no need to learn or to follow any particular commitment.

Chapter 26: *Amending Mistakes and Violations*

Each of the three paths of Hinayana, Mahayana, and Tantrayana is based on ethical codes comprising distinct sets of rules called vows, training, and commitments, respectively. To disregard these rules would breach one's ethical code and would be deemed an obstacle to realization. For this reason, each path has its own methods for purifying transgressions and renewing vows, trainings, and commitments.

In particular, in the highest tantras it is said that by honoring commitments, even those who do not apply themselves to practice will soon attain spiritual realization. Thus it is important for a tantric practitioner who has violated the commitments to purify and renew them by such methods as apologizing to the teacher and the deities, performing the fire-offering ritual, reciting mantras, offering precious gems to the master, and above all, by maintaining the knowledge that all actions and their karmic traces are devoid of reality.

This chapter explains that the pure awareness of one's primordial state is a far greater method of purification than those taught in the sutras and tantras. Its power is such that when awakened, pure awareness can instantly nullify any mistake or violation of the commitments. This is because in pure awareness, the grasping that would connect the individual to his past actions and his obscurations from birth, is absent; thus, it is as if past actions and obscurations had never existed. Since pure awareness is unconnected to notions of an ego or of the three times, any emotion that arises lacks the power to condition. Pure awareness is the total self that pervades everything; in this awareness, there is no grasping to things as real. Purity is naturally present; it does not depend on a process of purification. But when such pure awareness awakens—as when one awakens from a bad dream—the impurity that in reality has never existed, is

purified.

To illustrate its power, our text states that meditation on the marvelous state can reduce two hundred seventy massive mountains to dust. However, all the world systems of the universe are indeed of the same nature as the primordial state. This means that a yogin who has gained certainty of the mind essence need not engage in any intentional contemplation. The mind essence is the Body dimension that is the universe; it is the Voice as wisdom or clarity manifesting in the dimension of the expanse of reality; it is the Mind as that expanse itself, naturally manifesting in pure awareness that is the meditator. There is no action to be performed in relation to an object of meditation; the meditator simply remains in the luminous, unobstructed, and unmoving mind essence.

Body, Voice, and Mind are distinguished in terms of sky and earth or material dimensions. Sky is the ineffable nature of Body, Voice, and Mind, that is, the empty aspect of the primordial state. Earth, referring to the measurable universe with its realms composed of atoms, is the primordial state in its energy manifestation aspect. Every atom of the primordial state can manifest as infinite world systems and beings, yet even should these atoms be destroyed, the primordial state would remain.

Thus, the root of mistakes and violations of commitments is not connected to the manifestation of the universe and living beings. In fact, these manifestations are the material dimension of the primordial state. Mistakes and violations occur when recognition of the primordial state has not yet taken place. When the manifestations of the universe and of living beings are recognized as the very Body of the primordial state, such recognition is endowed with natural contemplation whose power amends all possible transgressions of commitments, without the intentional performance of remedial actions.

Chapter 27: *The Distinction Between Lights*

Here the Teacher explains that our entire field of experience is nothing but the effulgence of the primordial state. The emotions, the aggregates of body and mind, the five sense consciousnesses, the senses and their respective objects, and the five elements are that effulgence. This means that when a yogin has perfect contemplation, even if his consciousness is intentionally directed at objects, it does not get involved with them. Such is the natural condition of this yogin even while dreaming, fainting, and so on. The pure awareness remains in its vast expanse in which all emotions are wisdom and all phenomena, being indivisible,

are nondual purity.

The light of wisdom radiating from pure awareness is the source of all world systems and is also their nature. No suffering is to be found in the world systems of cyclic existence, which is itself nothing but enlightenment. Knowledge of this is the ultimate medicine that brings happiness and good health, and since it transcends time and space, it is also-called transcendence (nirvana).

The next section of this chapter, a description of the setting, delivers this tantra's fundamental message. The setting is described as a nondual dimension in which the Teacher transmits to Vajrasattva a supreme teaching with no mention of the gradual path of Sutra based on endeavor.

Briefly, the message transmitted is that the goal of the Secret Mantra practices —the state of the buddhas of the five families—is already present in one's self. In this message, expressed metaphorically as the union of male and female deities, such union stands for the inseparability of the two aspects of the primordial condition, namely primordial purity and self-perfection. The struggle for enlightenment ceases in one who, in a condition beyond action, knows that the inseparability of primordial purity and self-perfection is one's own natural endowment.

A third unnamed person explains that the fundamental meaning of this text is the marvelous primordial state as expressed in the words of the Teacher, and that the goal anticipated by those who follow a spiritual path has existed and will exist forever within one's self. This goal is one's own primordial state that, seen from different angles, comprises the various dimensions or *kayas* of enlightenment.

Among these dimensions, it is from the changeless and empty nature of reality (*dharmakaya*, the aspect of primordial purity) that the light of wisdom or clarity (*sambhogakaya*, the aspect of self-perfection) manifests as the entire universe and its infinite beings. The whole universe is an inconceivable mass of light pervaded by emptiness through which we can realize our primordial state, much in the way that the nature of a mirror can be understood through its reflections.

In reply to Vajrasattva's question as to the nature of the dimension of reality (*dharmakaya*) and the light of wisdom, the Teacher states that the dimension of reality is the lack of concreteness of the universe, and the inconceivable light of wisdom is not different from that and is as vast as that. This light is beyond comparison with the luster of the buddhas or of the sun and moon: it is the infinite radiance of the wisdom of one's self.

Chapter 28: *The Five Paths of Samsara*

Here it is explained that the five emotions of attachment, anger, jealousy, pride, and ignorance (which in chapter 8 were presented as paths to liberation), when not recognized as the energy of one's primordial state, are the way in which conditioned existence unfolds. When they are seen as the light of one's primordial state, they are the wisdoms of the male buddhas of the five families.

Chapter 29: *The Five Paths as the Expanse of the True Nature of the Five Female Buddhas*

Here, the four actions of stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, killing, and all other types of actions that in the lower spiritual paths are considered actions that bind one to cyclic existence, are correlated with the five elements of earth, water, air, fire, and space, respectively.

In tantric symbology, the purity of the five elements denotes the five female buddhas. Usually, the purity of earth is Buddhalocana, the purity of water is Mamaki, the purity of air is Samayatara, the purity of fire is Pandaravasini, and space—the underlying nature of all elements—is Dhatvishvari. Occasionally the first two are reversed.

Regarding the family to which these five female buddhas belong, without specifying its reasons the text implies that stealing is associated with the Jewel family of Ratnasambhava; sexual misconduct with the Vajra family of Akshobhya; lying with the Action family of Amoghasiddhi; killing with the Lotus family of Amitabha; and all other types of actions, with the Transcendent family of Vairocana. Thus here, as mentioned in chapter 13, such deplorable actions, when enacted in a state of pure awareness and in the right circumstances, do not bind one to cyclic existence but are an expression of enlightenment itself.

Chapter 30: *The Pure Realm That Has No Cause and Effect*

Here we are shown that what the lower spiritual paths regard as the causes and effects of cyclic existence are in reality a pure realm. The pure realm, here depicted in tantric imagery, represents the primordial condition of the individual that is beyond grasping attachment and other limitations.

Whoever dwells in the knowledge of this pure realm recognizes the three

poisons of attachment, anger, and ignorance as wisdom; thus, the cause and result of the suffering of cyclic existence are no more. Such knowledge is embodied in the image of the *heruka* at the center of the pure realm. Sometimes translated in Tibetan as *khrag 'thung* (blood-drinker), *heruka* is a general name for the main figure of the mandala, usually wrathful in form. This blood-drinking *heruka* is described as the one who kills that which has no life, since all that appears and exists has no existence apart from being one's own manifestation.

Encircling him are the eight charnel grounds surrounding the main mandalas of the highest tantras. These eight usually symbolize the purity of the eight consciousnesses or the eight similes for unreality: reflection in a mirror, dream, magical creation, optical illusion, city of *gandharvas*, echo, reflection in water, and space. But here they symbolize that one's primordial state is beyond grasping attachment.

When phenomena are not conceptualized, altered, differentiated, or examined, the understanding of one's true nature dawns by itself. This is the final result that is not to be attained, yet is known as the final attainment because, indefinable, it can appear as anything, even as attainment. Just as the reflections of the sun, moon, and stars may appear in muddy water once it becomes clear, the principle of primordial enlightenment as the final attainment becomes manifest in pure awareness. Yet there is no effort to be made in relation to such a pure realm, for it is a pathless land that cannot be entered through constructed meditation. As the condition that always is, it cannot be abandoned. It is neither within range of the objects of the mind, nor can it be perceived with the senses. An undivided, vast openness of reality, it is not definable as outer, inner, or by any other spatial category. It is only for the sake of those of limited understanding that this pure realm is spoken of as an attainment.

It is the reality underlying Body, Voice, and Mind. Not restricted to tantric categories, it knows no impairment with respect to commitments. It is the total greatness, which is marvelous.

Chapter 31: *The Utter Purity of All Phenomena*

From this point on, the Teacher and his interlocutor disappear from the text. Most of the remaining chapters are brief, with an unidentified speaker briefly restating the Teacher's presentation of the principle of *The Marvelous Primordial State*.

Although in this and in the following chapters the text seems to describe how

the Teacher transmits the teaching in a given spatial and temporal dimension, in reality the word Teacher should be understood as referring to one's self, and that which is described should be understood as the nature and recognition of one's self. Here the text concisely explains that when we realize that all phenomena of cyclic existence and of its transcendence are the ultimate dimension just described—that is, one's self—all concepts are supplanted by a state of nonduality devoid of subject and object; thus, the meaning of the marvelous primordial state emerges from within us, beyond all limits.

Chapter 32: *Primordially Present Total Wisdom*

This chapter tells us that the true nature of one's self and all the universe is also the very nature of enlightenment. Thus, the dimension of enlightenment and its clarity that manifests everything are inseparable from one another. Moreover, all yogas are contained in Atiyoga, the knowledge whose principle is the recognition of the primordial state.

Chapter 33: *Primordial Enlightenment*

This chapter explains that one's primordial state, here called the King of Nonconceptuality, is the transcendence of suffering, which is primordial enlightenment. As such a king is not restricted to a specific spatial dimension, all possible phenomena emanate through his creative potentiality that is wisdom. Emphasizing again the principle of union and liberation in the unique perspective of Dzogchen, the text states that all these phenomena are naturally united and liberated in one's primordial state that never changes its condition, never transmigrates in cyclic existence, and cannot be found anywhere.

Chapter 34: *From the Light of the Body and the Rays of the Voice*

Here it is stated that one's self is total bliss. Everything manifests from the expanse of such bliss through the light of the reality dimension, here called Body, and the rays of wisdom, called Voice. Everything that appears and exists arises through the primordial purity and through the infinite potentiality from which it is indivisible. Using the tantric image of the male and female in union to symbolize this creative process, these two aspects of the primordial state are metaphorically referred to as the All-Knowing Dharma Lord and his consort, the

Queen of Desire. When the import of this dynamic process is fully understood, duality ceases and phenomena are realized as perfect enlightenment.

Chapter 35: *Primordial Nirvana*

As indicated in the previous chapter, the natural state of the individual is the transcendence of suffering (nirvana) that has always been present as primordial enlightenment. Three points substantiate this: first, the empty aspect of this state, which resembles a king, is present as wisdom beyond concepts; second, because it is the essence of all pure and impure realms, it knows all realms simultaneously; third, the primordial state is the universe in its entirety, including all worlds and infinite living beings. Thus, it is Body, Voice, and Mind that are its dimension, as well as the wisdom pervading that dimension.

Chapter 36: *The Purpose of This Teaching*

Here it is explained that this tantra presents the principle of the primordial state to facilitate the understanding that the goal of the spiritual path—the enlightened Body, Voice, and Mind—are already present, self-perfected, in one's self. Eight points relating to the primordial state are elaborated upon: its nature, great pervasiveness, literal meaning, cause and effect, great transcendence of suffering, transcendence of all concepts, being the primordial state of Buddha, and not being a final destination. These eight points are in fact a general outline of the principal topics discussed in the book's earlier chapters.

Chapter 37: *The Literal Meaning*

This is a reformulation of the meaning of the compound term *bodhicitta,* rendered in Tibetan by the three words (instead of two as in Sanskrit) *byang chub sems*, as mentioned at the conclusion of chapter 7, and qualifying *bodhicitta* with the term *mahasukha* (*bde ba chen po*), great or total bliss.

Byang, meaning pure, indicates that one's primordial state has never been marred by negativity, and also that it is a wisdom that simultaneously and directly knows all that exists. *Chub,* total, indicates that the primordial state is the essence of all that exists. *Sems*, mind, indicates an immaculate wisdom, already realized, which is inherent in one's ground of being. In Tibetan, *bde ba*, bliss, means that Body, Voice, and Mind are spontaneously and instantly

perfected in the expanse of the true nature of reality, and abide as bliss. *Chen po*, great or total, means that it is pure, exists from the beginning, and is unsurpassable.

A brief description of the characteristics of Mind, Body, and Voice follows. In conclusion, our text states that phenomena, understood in their dimension of emptiness symbolized by Samantabhadri, are realized as the Body, Voice, and Mind of enlightenment, naturally perfect since their origin. When this is understood, one effortlessly experiences pure awareness, and the aspect of wisdom manifest as the vision of the environment and beings integrates into the dimension of total bliss of one's primordial state. Within this nonduality, from the unborn nature of mind that is beyond description manifest all forms, colors, and so on, without the unborn nature ever departing from its changeless and blissful dimension of reality.

Chapter 38: *The Benefits of Understanding*

This section likens the discovery of one's primordial state to finding the supreme jewel of the universe. Once this jewel has been discovered, one's entire perceptual field is experienced as a sky-like wisdom. Environment and beings, regardless of the levels of existence to which they belong, are seen as perfect. Thus, the primordial state is like a wish-fulfilling precious jewel that yields all desirable things.

This means that all is self-originated wisdom, naturally free of causes and conditions, in which even phenomena bound to birth and death are from their origin the state of Buddha. They are by nature limpid insofar as they are great wisdom, resembling celestial light, without external or internal aspects. When one is certain in the knowledge of this principle, that which appears as an impure realm is realized as the level of Buddha; such is the great benefit of understanding the primordial state.

Chapter 39: *Defects of the Student*

In this section the traits of those unsuited to receive oral instructions on Atiyoga are highlighted, and teachers are advised not to impart such instructions to them, for the limitations of mind and emotions of these students narrow the scope of their spiritual practice and temporarily hamper their ability to grasp the depth of Atiyoga teaching.

Chapter 40: *The Reasons for Teaching Qualified Students*

This chapter describes the extraordinary qualities of this tantra's message that are reasons for its transmission to disciples qualified to hear it.

Our Translation

Our translation is based mainly on eight different editions of the three versions of the text mentioned above, formatted in the Wylie transliteration system by Jim Valby. These are:

(1) *The Marvelous Primordial State (Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba)* found in the Tsamtrag edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2 (ff. 774-856), translated by Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara ;

(2) the same work in the Dilgo Khyentse edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2 (ff. 567-624);

(3) *The Marvelous Primordial State* (*Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba)* in the *Collected Tantras of Vairocana*, volume 2 (ff. 105-171), bearing no colophon;

(4) *The Marvelous Primordial State, Total Bliss (bDe ba chen po byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba)*, in the Tsamtrag edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2 (ff. 693-774), translated by Shri Simha and Vairocana;

(5) the same work in the Dilgo Khyentse edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2 (ff. 2-68);

(6) the same work in the Derge edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, vol. Ra (ff. 224-249);

(7) *Marvelous Total Existence (Chos chen po rmad du byung ba)* in the Tsamtrag edition, volume 6 (ff. 570-621), bearing no colophon, of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition;* and

(8) the same work in the Dilgo Khyentse edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2 (ff. 487-531). Here we consulted only the early chapters.

Versions one to six of the text are largely identical except for the number of chapters and arrangement of the material within the chapters. They differ in details of grammar such as the use of the genitive instead of the instrumental or

vice versa; the use of the particle *ni* (indicating the subject) instead of the instrumental or vice versa; the use of the conjunctives *zhing* or *dang* instead of the pronoun or the continuative *de* or vice versa; the use of the conjunctives *zhing* or *dang* instead of the continuative *ste*; the use of the infinitive *yin* (to be) instead of the conjunctive *zhing* or vice versa; the use of the infinitive *yin* (to be) instead of the genitive *yi* or vice versa; the use of the genitive *'i* indicating the pronoun or sometimes the continuative *de* or vice versa; the use of the dative/locative *la* instead of the *las* derivative or vice versa; the use of terms with instrumental particles instead of words without such particles or vice versa; and so forth.

Rarely, isolated words are different, for example, *rgyu* (cause) instead of *rgyun* (continuation) or vice versa; *chos (*phenomena) instead of *chos nyid* (true nature of reality); *rtog* (concept) instead of *rtogs* (understanding) or vice versa; and so on. The negative *ma* occasionally appears before verbs in some editions and not in others. Moreover, in some instances, the chapter titles stated at the beginning and at the end of a chapter do not match.

Although it often seemed evident that a particular edition was mistaken, at times such differences in grammatical details determined a different reading of the sentence and made it difficult for us to decide which edition to follow, particularly when the two different editions made equal sense. Although our translation is based on the chapter order of the Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara version of the text, to understand the meaning of a sentence we often resorted to the edition that made the most sense in the context, or followed the usage found in the majority of the editions. In doing so, our translation moved from one edition to another, much in the way that the Tibetan editors of old must have worked on such texts. Prepared by Jim Valby, our critical edition of the Tibetan text, the result of comparing the various editions, is found in an appendix at the end of a separate publication of this book.

As in *The All-Creating King* (*Kun byed rgyal po*), in this scripture the Teacher often uses the term "I," "my," or "me," which should be understood as referring to the reader's own primordial state and not to a being outside one's self. Similarly, when the Teacher says: "I am the creator," or, "I have created everything," using the verb *byed pa* (to do or create) or says "All is the activity of the Tathagata," using the noun *mdzad pa* (deed or activity) or the verb *mdzad pa*, the honorific of *byed pa,* these phrases are not to be understood in the sense of a universal creator, a god who created the universe as an act of will. The real sense refers to the primordial state of the individual that by its very nature

possesses the potentiality to effortlessly and without intentionality manifest the whole universe and the beings who inhabit it. For this reason we have rendered the verb *byed pa* primarily as “manifested.” Moreover, the meaning of “All is the activity of the Tathagata,” is that all is the energy manifestation (*rol pa*) of one’s already enlightened state; everything is the creation of one’s state that is the Tathagata.

The term *rig pa* has been loosely translated as “pure awareness.” However, we remind the reader that in this context, “awareness” does not refer to knowledge or perception of a situation or fact, but to an awareness that is neither related to any object nor supported by anything. It is a state representing the basic reality of being and of all existence.

The term *sku*, *kaya* in Sanskrit, has been translated as “dimension,” “Body dimension,” or “Body,” and occasionally left untranslated. This has been done in order to render the different shades of meaning that the term takes on in this scripture. Another key term, *bdag nyid*, that also refers to the all-inclusive nature of one’s primordial state has been translated variously as “one’s state,” or as “one’s self.” Lastly, in the title and in the course of the text, at the suggestion of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the term *byang chub sems, bodhicitta* in Sanskrit, has been rendered as “primordial state.”

Copious notes have been added with the intention of helping the reader grasp the content of this scripture. Wherever possible, I have referred in the notes to explanations of citations in our text found in *Light for Eyes of Contemplation* by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, an important and unique work that illuminates the various Buddhist spiritual paths, particularly the Atiyoga. I have also consulted a small text attributed to the same author, an extract from *The Heart Sun: Mind Essence of All Scholars and Siddhas (Phan grub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma)* contained in the first volume of the *Collection of Tantras of Vairocana (Bai ro rgyud ’bum).* This brief text was edited and given the title *Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba’i nyams khrid* by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

The Marvelous Primordial State

The Indian title is *Bodhicitta Saubhashika.*
The Tibetan title is *Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba*.
The English title is *The Marvelous Primordial State.*
This is part of the teachings on the Marvelous Primordial State.

HOMAGE

Homage to the Bhagavan Shri Vajrasattva,
Glory of all glories!

The marvelous primordial state is the real dimension.
Here the meaning of its infinite qualities will be explained.

CHAPTER 1
The Setting of the Teaching

The buddhas of the three times, the yogins possessing [knowledge of] the *vajra* [state], hosts of powerful blood-drinking *mamos*, and different kinds of *devas*, *asuras*, *vayudevas*, *yamas*, *nagas*, *kumbhandas*, *yakshas*, *rakshasas*, and *bhutas*, all drew irresistibly together because of faith. [1]

Thronging with deities, the exquisite, inconceivable mansions of these pure realms were radiant like fire, lit by the sun and moon seats of luminous thrones that appeared to be made entirely of jewels. This was the buddhafield of the fortunate ones.

Hostile harmful beings were excluded. Who were they? *Bhutas*, *kumbhandas*, *rakshasas*, *pretas*, and *putanas* did not hear this marvelous [teaching].[2]

The quality of this marvelous primordial state was taught by the Protector of the World.[3] Those who oppose it will be assailed by every kind of fear, their heads will split into seven pieces, and they will be turned away by mantric adepts.

This marvelous primordial state is the secret accomplishment, the supreme Mind[4] of the great, glorious Lotus Heruka. It was taught for the benefit of the large retinue of the Great Glorious One, extraordinary yogins [with the knowledge] of enlightenment, retinues of wisdom yoginis, fearless Vajrasattva, and fortunate ones [all of whom] were unafraid of spiritual discourse and were not stained by karma. It was not taught to others.

So ends the first chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, the setting of the teaching.

CHAPTER 2
The Marvelous Primordial State

The Bhagavan, while residing in the essence of enlightenment in the realm of Akanishta,[5] looked at Vajrasattva and then entered the equanimity of the contemplation called “the marvelous primordial state of marvelous existence.”

At that time, in order for Vajrasattva to understand that the *sugatas*[6] of the three times and the infinite, limitless universe of a billion world systems[7] have the same nature; that they all arise and manifest from the marvelous primordial state that is one’s self; and that the mandalas arising from them are the mandalas of the marvelous [state], he gazed at Vajrasattva and opening the door of the mandala of the mind, manifested clearly the principle of the knowledge of one’s state.

Having clearly and distinctly illuminated the real nature of everything, he revealed that Vajrasattva, all the *sugatas*, and the infinite, limitless universe of a billion world systems are the marvelous primordial state itself. He revealed that the mandalas that manifest from the marvelous primordial state are the marvelous mandala of the Body, the marvelous Body; the marvelous mandala of the Voice, the marvelous Voice; the marvelous mandala of the Mind, the marvelous Mind; and the marvelous total reality.

In this way [he made Vajrasattva understand that] all of these are the Body, Voice, and Mind of himself, the Bhagavan.

Then Vajrasattva said:

Sage of the World! Perfect Buddha!
With the aim of enlightening, you have taught the meaning of the lamp of the Mind.
Those who have doubt or a mental disposition that opposes [this teaching], will be assailed by every kind of fear, and their heads will split into seven pieces. Also, I, Vajrasattva, will be hostile to them, and they will be turned away by mantric adepts.
You have revealed the meaning of the lamp of the Mind that I, Vajrasattva, had not previously understood and which is the secret, marvelous view of all Mantra [vehicles].[8]
I pay homage to that principle which is honored [by] the buddhas.
I pay homage to the Buddha, the benefactor who, feeling love for all [beings], has revealed that principle for their benefit.
May the meaning revealed for their benefit be realized in me.
May I realize that meaning that is [like] the light of a limitless blazing fire, and may I have the same fortune as all buddhas. May [my knowledge] spread even more than that of all buddhas.
I beseech the yogins of the three times[9] to teach for the benefit of all fortunate ones to come.
Also, I, Vajrasattva, manifested my enlightenment anew at Vajrasana[10] upon understanding the principle of the marvelous primordial state."[11]
This marvelous primordial state is not understood by everyone. It is not understood by devas. It is difficult to understand even for bodhisattvas. In the past, it was not understood [even] by the *sugatas*.

[Then the Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!
The true essence of the supreme meditation of the Omniscient One cannot be conceived.[12] For the one who unites with my body, there is no enlightenment and no meditation.[13]
The characteristics of body, voice, and mind are the primordial state of the five wisdoms.[14]
The total state of the mind of all sentient beings is naturally pure and therefore, stainless.
Everything is unborn and uncontaminated.
There is no enlightenment and no actual realization.
There is no nature of the elements and no elements.
Without characteristics and immutable like space, neither dual nor nondual, this

primordial state is the awakened eye.[15]

[Again the Bhagavan spoke:]

Listen, Mahasattva!
The Body, Voice, and Mind of all the *sugatas* and everything of the infinite, limitless universe of a billion world systems are the same: they are my marvelous primordial state itself.
They are the marvelous total reality that originates from one's awareness.
They are my marvelous great magical display.
They are my marvelous miraculous display.
They are my marvelous great manifestation.
They are my marvelous activity.
They are my marvelous great mandala.
They are my marvelous secret.
They are the secret, the great secret, the secret essential condition, and the marvelous secret view of all the *sugatas* and of Vajrasattva himself.
They are the marvelous secret mandala of the Body, the marvelous Body.
They are the marvelous secret mandala of the Voice, the marvelous Voice.
They are the marvelous secret mandala of the Mind, the marvelous Mind.

So ends the second chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals the marvelous primordial state.

CHAPTER 3
The True Nature of Reality

This chapter explains the true nature of reality.

To this end [the Bhagavan said]:

Mahasattva!
Those who desire enlightenment have no enlightenment and are far from the levels of realization, far from the supreme enlightenment that is complete liberation.
Whoever understands the true nature of reality that is like [the universal] cause has the certainty that the primordial state is one's self.
Since one's self is the essence of enlightenment, there is nothing to attain and nothing to abandon.
The enlightenment of the buddhas is a verbal designation and does not really exist.[16]
The characteristics of phenomena are totally pure, and always arise from the nature of reality that has no identity.
Phenomena that are not born have no essence, and thus there is nothing about them on which to meditate.
Since they are self-originated like space, all phenomena are proclaimed to be always perfect.[17]
Since phenomena are natural luminosity, they are primordially pure, like space.
There is no enlightenment and there are no sentient beings.
[Everything] arises from the reality that has no identity.
Enlightenment, which is the perfect realization of the primordial state, is beyond concepts and cannot be thought of as an object.

So ends the third chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals the true nature of reality.

CHAPTER 4
The Greatness

This chapter explains the greatness.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!
In the self-originated mandala of Mind, perfect wisdom abides like a mirror.
I am the wisdom of the buddhas who abide in the three times.
Since I have understood the principle of the primordial state, I am the embodiment of all buddhas;
I am the tomb of all buddhas;
I am the great charnel ground;[18]
All *mahasattvas* and all sentient beings come from me;
I am the tomb of sentient beings.
Fortunate one, understand this!

All buddhas are my realm.
All sentient beings are the treasure of the three *kayas*.[19]
Everything is the cause of my enjoyment.

The fortunate [Vajra]sattva, having heard these words, saw the face [of the Bhagavan], and in this marvelous secret mandala he understood the primordial state as his real nature. Joining his palms together, he said the following:

You manifest as the Mind, the innermost state of the Mind,[20] of all buddhas of the three times.
You manifest as the Body, the innermost state of the Body, of all buddhas of the three times.
You manifest as the Voice, the innermost state of the Voice, of all buddhas of the three times.

After he said this[, the Bhagavan spoke]:

Mahasattva!
I alone arose at the beginning, before the millions of eons,
I arose before the elements.

The Body, Voice, and Mind of the buddhas arose from me. Therefore, your [primordial state of] Mind, O Mahasattva, is my great blessing, and thus it embraces all buddhas of the three times and all great yogins, and it shines, visible as rays of light.[21]

Mahasattva, fortunate one!

Know that any yogin who has this [knowledge] is the very state of Body, Voice, and Mind of [Vajra]sattva.

The yogin who understands this principle does not abide on the level of enlightenment, for all is the very level [of enlightenment] [22] that is my [primordial state of] Mind. All sentient beings arose from me.

So ends the fourth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals the greatness.

CHAPTER 5
The Proclamation of the Secret

This chapter explains the proclamation of the secret.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

> Mahasattva!
> Since I, the creator, am naturally pure, there is nothing that is not enlightened; conditioned phenomena have never existed. Therefore, all phenomena are primordially pure.
> Since I am the yogin of the *dharmakaya*, all my phenomena are beyond concepts.
> I was enlightened before all buddhas.
> Before space arose,[23] the characteristics of space never existed.
> Before attachment to anything arose, the passion of attachment never existed.
> Before existence arose, the [characteristic] nature of existence never existed.
> Before the elements arose, the [nature] of the five great [elements] never existed.
> Before the buddhas arose, the term sentient being never existed.
> Before nirvana arose, the nature of samsara never existed.
> I arose before any of those things.
> I manifested everything.
> Everything was born from me.
> Everything arose from me.

Thus he spoke.

So ends the fifth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, the proclamation of the secret.

CHAPTER 6
The Miracle

This chapter explains the great miracle of the primordial state.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Just like space, Mind essence that has no root or basis cannot be purified by washing.
Since enlightenment is free from origination, it is totally beyond cause and effect.
When one recognizes this marvelous primordial state through the great wisdom of one's awareness, the great manifestation of energy that is the method is perfected in oneself,[24] and this is enlightenment.
Five aspects explain the great miracle of the primordial state:
– the marvelous great magical display of the primordial state;
– the marvelous great miraculous display of the primordial state;
– the marvelous great magical display that fully reveals the total manifestation of the primordial state;
– the marvelous magical display that teaches the marvelous quality of the secret of the primordial state;
– the marvelous quality that directly reveals the magical display of the secret tantra of the great secret of the primordial state.

So ends the sixth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals the great miracle of the primordial state.

CHAPTER 7
The Secret Nature

This chapter explains the secret nature of the primordial state.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

This great miracle of the marvelous secret primordial state is the quality of Body, Voice, and Mind itself.
This was not taught by the buddhas of the past.

Listen, Mahasattva!
That which is beyond appearing is the marvelous secret Mind.
When one has knowledge of the path of perfect enlightenment [, this knowledge], like the sky, pervades everything without attachment, and unifies [everything] in oneself: this is the marvelous primordial state.

Listen, Mahasattva!
That which visibly appears everywhere without being constructed is the mandala of the marvelous Body.
The phenomena that arise from one's awareness cannot be thought of in any way: the condition that has this [nonconceptual] quality is the marvelous primordial state itself.[25]

Listen, Mahasattva!
The various sounds, unborn and unproduced, that distinctly arise from one's state are the mandala of the marvelous Voice.
[The condition of] Body, Voice, and Mind in contemplation beyond sound is the marvelous primordial state itself.

Listen, Mahasattva!
The reality that arises from the mind that is awareness is [like] space that has no form but pervades everything: this is the marvelous primordial state.

Listen, Mahasattva!
The Body, Voice, and Mind beyond specific marks that manifest clearly as the spontaneously perfect five *kayas*[26] are the marvelous primordial state.

Listen, Mahasattva!
The five great elements are the mandala of the spontaneously perfect five *kayas*.
The pure essence of the five great [elements] is the marvelous, immaculate

primordial state.

This pure essence is the nucleus of clarity that is extremely difficult to analyze: such wisdom has the quality of the Mind [of the buddhas].[27]

Listen, Mahasattva!

The various sounds that arise from each of the uncontrived, uncreated, and inconceivable great elements are just me.

Listen, Mahasattva!

Since all these arise from me and do not have any essence, they are the *dharmakaya*, the marvelous primordial state.

Since the four great elements are the arising of manifestation and the cause of all that manifests, they are the marvelous primordial state.

Since whatever arises and manifests from the four great elements and the sentient beings of the four types of birth[28] are one's self—the [real nature of] enlightenment beyond enlightenment[29]—they are the marvelous primordial state itself.

Listen, Mahasattva!

In fact, pure[30] means that all phenomena that arise from one's self are primordially devoid of the stain of the emotions.

Total refers to the perfect knowledge that understands that past, future, and present and all the infinite limitless world systems of the three thousandfold universe are the same, because not even one particle other than the Body, Voice, and Mind exists. Thus, the meaning of all phenomena is indivisible.

Mind is the contemplation of clarity that never stirs from the indivisibility of everything as Body, Voice, and Mind.

So ends the seventh chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals the secret nature.

CHAPTER 8
The Path of Liberation

This chapter explains the path of liberation of the primordial state.

The Mahasattva asked:

Bhagavan!
How many paths of liberation do the buddhas of the five families possess?

The [Bhagavan] replied:

Listen, Mahasattva!
All *tathagatas* possess the five liberations of the true nature of reality, the unmistaken path of liberation. These are: attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy.
Regarding [desire-attachment], desire[31] means to enjoy one's self, beyond time and form, in the phenomena that arise from one's self. Attachment means to be governed by this desire.
The phenomena that originate from one's self are forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects. In what manner are they desired? They are desired [with the knowledge that] they are all one's self and with attachment to this desire.

Anger is the very nature of the manifestation of all phenomena that primordially exist in one's self.[32] It is the true nature of reality, which cannot be abandoned even by trying and cannot be cleaned even by washing.
It is anger toward abandoning attachment, anger toward abandoning anger, anger toward abandoning ignorance, anger toward abandoning pride, and anger toward abandoning jealousy.
Ignorance is the understanding that since there is no concept of difference concerning all phenomena originating from one's self,[33] there are no different points of view.
Ignorance is the understanding that Body, Voice, and Mind, while abiding in a dimension of sameness without the concept of sameness, are of the same essence and indivisible.
Ignorance is [the understanding] that since there is no concept of origination or birth from somewhere else, all *tathagatas* and all phenomena arise from one's self.
Ignorance is [the understanding that] all phenomena are the very Mind of the Sugata, and that when one enjoys the supreme secret, everything abides in one's single self and there is no concept of various levels [of realization].[34]

Ignorance is [the understanding that everything] is one's self and the dimension of one's self, and that there is nothing that manifests as other than, arises as other than, occurs as other then, ceases in other than, is born as other than, derives from other than, or is other than that.
Ignorance is [the understanding that] the various *nirmanakayas* that arise from one's self manifest in every possible way without appearing in a single form.

With regard to pride, the understanding and knowledge that all phenomena originate from one's self and that all that arises has no I or identity is pride that reveals that all phenomena are devoid of I or self.
The understanding of the greatness of all the unsurpassable phenomena that arise from one's self is pride that reveals one's self in the three times and also displays the greatness of one's self.
Enjoying one's self at all times in the phenomena that arise from one's self is pride that reveals that the dimension of the [natural] manifestation of energy can appear in all possible forms.
The understanding that all phenomena, the three spheres of existence, the five great [elements], and all beings manifest from one's self is pride that reveals that everything is unified in one's self and is one's self.

Jealousy [leaves no room for] the concept of difference regarding phenomena that are of the same nature as one's self.
Jealousy [leaves no room for] grasping at the distinct characteristics of attachment, anger, and ignorance that from the beginning are indivisible as Body, Voice, and Mind.
Jealousy [leaves no room for] erroneously conceiving the authentic principle once it has been unerringly ascertained.
Jealousy [leaves no room for] not understanding that all these phenomena are [the nature of] the Sugata.
Jealousy [leaves no room for] not seeing full liberation in the path of greatness.[35]

So ends the eighth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* which reveals the path of liberation of the primordial state.

CHAPTER 9
The Unexcelled

This chapter explains how the primordial state is unexcelled from the beginning.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Hero Vajrasattva,
You are the knowledge of the path of perfect enlightenment.[36]
Like the sky, you have no birth.[37]
You pervade the five pure aggregates.[38]
The variety of [phenomena] originates from you.
There is nothing that does not originate from you.
You are the cause of the variety of appearances.
You are the *nirmanakaya* of all buddhas,[39]
You are the unsurpassable enlightenment of the buddhas,
The reality devoid of identity, utterly pure,[40]
The authentic wisdom that is the universal path,
The unborn reality that is the [unique] meaning of variety.[41]
You appeared before the elements,
One, nondual, the meaning of reality,[42]
The supreme reality, fearless.[43]
There is no letter that has not originated from you.
In all that is generated as the content of the Secret Mantra,
You are [the primordial state] that includes all forms yet has no form;
Since you are devoid of branches, you are beyond reckoning.[44]
You are that which is understood by all buddhas,[45]
That which is realized by all buddhas:
The unsurpassable enlightenment of the buddhas.
One's richness emanates from one's self.
The forms that emanate from one's self
[Experience] their own richness in all possible ways,
And display emanations in all possible guises.[46]
Various miraculous displays originate from you.
The dimension of manifestation appears in every possible way.
The manifestation of enlightenment arises from you.

Mahasattva!
Everything has originated from you.

Mahasattva!
This is the marvelous secret of all buddhas.

Mahasattva, listen!
Everything is manifested through the wisdom of the Omniscient Ones,
And you are the one who transcends the body that is free of attachment.
My primordial state is subtle, uncontaminated, and free of the seed [of samsara].
Since it has no stains and is [thus] beyond stains, it is immaculate.[47]
It abides in all the *sugatas* and in all sentient beings.[48]
This is the supreme secret, the secret primordial state of all buddhas.
Mahasattva!
The Tathagata should be understood in this way.

He who has the body of wisdom is the Tathagata.[49] He abides in the light of the Body and manifests in the rays of the Voice.[50] Therefore, his dimension is totally pure, like space.[51]

In this regard, space is vast, all-pervading, and penetrates [everything] equally and unobstructedly, [but] that which manifests clearly is the light of the Body dimension, and not the nature of space.

The distinct clarity and total appearance of the five great elements are the lights of the five great [elements] as the Body dimension of the five families; this is not the light that pervades the realm of space, nor is it derived from the nature of space. In fact, space takes on the very same color as that of the Body dimension.

The light that emanates from the sun, moon, planets, stars, and so forth, illuminating the sky, is the light of the precious Body and the rays of the Voice expanding in the true nature of reality.

The colors and the various forms said to originate from the four great [elements, all] that appears distinctly [like] the colors of the clouds in the sky or the colors of the rainbow, are the blessing derived from the light of the Body dimensions and the wisdoms of the different [enlightened] families; even the color of space is not derived from the power of the four great [elements].

If the Body dimension is white, space is also white. Whatever the color of the Body dimension, the light of space is identical. The same applies to the colors of anything arising from the four great [elements].

The Body dimension of the Tathagata does not depend upon the five great [elements], is not produced by the cause of the four great [elements], and does not come into existence through the four types of birth.

The four great elements, all derived from the four elements [as colored light], all sentient beings born through the four types of birth, and all the world systems of the three thousandfold universe—all, without exception—originate from the Body, Voice, and Mind of the Tathagata, and appear in all possible ways as the great,

natural manifestation of energy of Body, Voice, and Mind.

They are displayed by the Tathagata for the purpose of governing[52] all phenomena and perpetually manifesting the great natural display of energy of all phenomena.

Before the five great [elements] existed, the Body of the Tathagata was already spontaneously arisen, abiding in the light of the Body and manifesting in the rays of the Voice.

So ends the ninth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals the unexcelled primordial state.

CHAPTER 10
The Supreme Secret

This chapter explains the supreme secret of the primordial state.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!

The marvelous secret of the primordial state is that all phenomena and the infinite universe of a billion world systems are the manifestation of the state of enlightenment; therefore, they are the marvelous secret.

Since they arise from the state of enlightenment, they are the marvelous secret.

Since they are born from the wisdom of the state of enlightenment, they are the marvelous secret.

Since there is nothing at all that does not arise or originate from the wisdom of one's awareness and there is no phenomenon that is not manifested by the wisdom of one's awareness, [everything] is the total reality: that is the marvelous secret.

Since it is very difficult for you, great bodhisattva, and for all [other] bodhisattvas to understand this, it is the most sublime secret.

So ends the tenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the supreme secret.

CHAPTER 11
The Definitive Secret Instruction

This chapter explains the definitive secret instruction.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Great Vajrasattva!

In the secret state that is the Mind of Vajrasattva there is not even one thing that is not included in Body, Voice, and Mind. Everything is the very Body, Voice, and Mind of all the *sugatas*: this is the secret.

The Tathagata possesses the five pure aggregates: totally pure form, the aggregate in which everything is one's self; fully liberated feeling, the aggregate that has no interruption; unborn perception, the aggregate that is the true nature of reality; volition devoid of grasping, the aggregate in which the [sense] doors are not different in any circumstance;[53] and totally pure consciousness, the aggregate that is the source of the manifestation of space-like wisdom.

In this regard, since the five Body dimensions exist as the real nature of the five aggregates and are the nature of all, they are called Body dimensions.

That which is called Vairocana, the Body, being the spontaneous perfection of the five Body dimensions [of the Tathagata], [54] is the *sambhogakaya*, and thus Vairocana [He Who Manifests Form].[55]

That which is called Vairocana [He Who Manifests Form] is the [nature] of the consciousness basis of all[56] as the five Body dimensions; through him, the diversity of forms is manifested in every possible way.

Therefore Mahasattva, how is this explained?

Of all the events in the past, future and, present; of all time and its subdivisions; of all the *sugatas* of the three times; of all that is born, humans and [other] living beings; of all the five great elements; and of all phenomena that manifest from the four elements, there exists not even one phenomenon that does not originate from the five pure Body dimensions.
Since all this originates from the five Body dimensions, not even one thing exists in any respect that is not the Body dimensions.
For this reason, not a single thing exists that is not enlightened.
The Body dimensions of all *tathagatas* manifest as outer, inner, secret, and as the three [aspects of] body, voice, and mind; thus, they manifest in everything.

How is this explained?

My utterly pure Body dimension emanates in all possible ways and becomes everything: it is ever changing.
I display the *vajra*[57] of the great manifestation of energy in the five elements that originate from the five Body dimensions.
I always exist and always manifest in all possible forms.
I display in all possible ways the great manifestation of energy of the *vajra*.
Through the total manifestation that governs the true nature of reality, I manifest and create the great magical display of forms in all possible ways.
This is because I always enjoy the magical display of the Body dimension that appears and manifests in all possible ways.

Therefore, Mahasattva, all the outer fields of experience are like this.
These billion world systems of the universe are the spectacle that is me, the Tathagata.
They are the true nature of reality that originates from me,
The domain in which the unmanifested is manifested,
The domain of the commitments that manifests [everything] so that nothing remains unmanifested,
The actual revelation of Body, Voice, and Mind,
The actual manifestation of Body, Voice, and Mind,
The inexhaustible treasury of Body, Voice, and Mind,
The real meaning of the inexhaustible manifestation,
The great miraculous display of the manifestation of energy of Body, Voice, and Mind,
The nature of the great miraculous display,
That which originates from my power,
The phenomena arising from my strength.

The chakra of the inexhaustible ornaments of Body, Voice, and Mind.

The entire billion world systems of the universe are my domain, my abode, and my celestial palace.[58]
They all are my Body, my Voice, and my Mind.
The entire billion world systems of the universe are the total perfection that is the level of enlightenment.
They are perfected in [the state of] total enlightenment,
They are the total bliss of the buddhafields,
The level of enlightenment,
The marvelous primordial state,
The essence of all.[59]
They are the marvelous Body,
The marvelous Voice,
The marvelous Mind,
The marvelous quality,
The marvelous secret,
The marvelous manifestation of energy,
The marvelous activity,
The marvelous miraculous display:
They are this marvelous primordial state itself.

The mastery of the highest level of enlightenment is just this marvelous state.
The final realization of the view of the buddhas is also this.
The final realization of the conduct of the buddhas is also this marvelous total reality.

That which is taught by the Perfect Teacher is also this marvelous state.
That which is heard by the perfect hearers is also this marvelous state.[60]
The total bliss of the buddhas is also this.
The five sensory objects of enjoyment of the buddhas are also this marvelous state.
The characteristics of the five sensory objects of enjoyment are also this marvelous state.
The ultimate total bliss of the buddhas is also this marvelous state.
The wheel of the teaching set in motion within the true nature of reality through the miraculous display of the emanations of the buddhas is also this marvelous state.
Attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy, too, are this marvelous primordial state.
The promulgation of the Dharma is this marvelous state.
The wheel of the Dharma is also this marvelous state.
The cyclic existence of samsara that revolves because one does not recognize the true nature of reality and that abides in this very nature as reality itself is also the

marvelous state.

In the universe of a billion world systems, not even the words samsara and emotions exist apart from Body, Voice, and Mind.
Not even the words “cause of birth as sentient beings” exist apart from their arising as buddhas.
The nature of sentient beings and of the five great [elements] have never existed apart from the manifestation of the Body dimension.
Not even the words “karma and suffering of sentient beings” exist apart from the total bliss of the buddhas.[61]
[All is] the unique total perfection, the ultimate state of enlightenment, and the environment and abode of sentient beings in the universe of a billion world systems are nothing other than my marvelous secret. Therefore, not even the environment and abode of sentient beings exist apart from the phenomena originating from my state.
[Thus,] the nature of the marvelous Body dimension and of the marvelous primordial state has been explained.

So ends the eleventh chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* which reveals the definitive secret instruction.

CHAPTER 12
Body, Voice, and Mind Beyond Seeking

This chapter reveals that the primordial state of Body, Voice, and Mind is realized without seeking.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!
The Body dimension of the supremely Victorious Ones, even though it manifests in all its variety, is always like a precious jewel. It is the path of the absolute that is realized through meditation.[62]

Thus, he spoke.
[Then the Bhagavan spoke again:]

Whatever the colors in which the Body dimension and whatever the variety it manifests, it is [always] like a precious jewel.
In fact, a white precious gem is always a jewel. Whether its color is red, blue, yellow, or green, a precious gem is always a jewel. Therefore, one cannot make the distinction, "this is a precious gem," and "this is not a precious gem."[63]
Similarly, with regard to the Body dimension of the supremely Victorious Ones—all the colors that appear, the myriad shapes that manifest, the scents that are smelled, the flavors that are tasted, the forms that are seen, the sounds that are heard, and the tactile sensations that are felt—they are all my Body, the Body dimension of the supremely Victorious Ones.[64]
Thus, one cannot say things like, "this color and shape is the Body dimension of the Victorious Ones," and "this [color or shape] is not the Body dimension of the Victorious Ones."[65] For this reason, the wisdom dimension of the buddhas is the variety of forms originating from the mind.[66]

Thus, he spoke.
[Then the Bhagavan spoke again:]

The Mind of the tathagatas is the inseparability of the eight wisdoms,[67] the nature that none can destroy, that arises inseparable from the dimension of the wisdom of awareness, the marvelous Mind.

Mahasattva!
All these billion world systems of the universe originate from the Mind of the

tathagatas, and nothing exists that is not the marvelous Mind.
Since the tathagatas are beyond extinction, there will never be a time when the infinite, limitless universe of a billion world systems becomes extinct or non-existent.
Since there will never be a time when the infinite, limitless world systems of the universe of a billion world systems become extinct or disappear, they are the Body, Voice, and Mind of the *sugatas*.
Since Body, Voice, and Mind will never become extinct or disappear, they are the marvelous primordial state itself.
Apart from the Body, Voice, and Mind of the tathagatas, nothing else can be called the universe of a billion world systems.

The Voice of the Tathagata is that which reveals in its entirety the indivisible meaning and the nature of Body, Voice, and Mind, and makes one clearly understand their distinct qualities.
Of all that manifests from the Voice, that is, all the possible varieties of sounds and voices; all the many names and terms, wisdoms, and so forth; [all] the many varieties of languages, not even one exists that is not the Voice.

Body and Mind, too, are the Voice. Voice and Mind, too, are Body. Voice is the *nirmanakaya*. Mind is the supreme *kaya* of the essence of enlightenment. Body is the *sambhogakaya*.

Mahasattva!
Understand that the nature of the Tathagata is this very marvelous state.
It has existed from the very beginning and abides forever.
It is the totally self-originated Body dimension of one's self.
It is the primordially pure *dharmakaya* that is one's total self.
It is one's self, spontaneously self-perfected from the beginning as Body, Voice, and Mind.
Being unchangeable, it is the *kaya* of merit.
Perfect from the beginning, it is the *nirmanakaya*.
Spontaneously perfect, it is the *sambhogakaya*.
Beyond action and seeking, it is the *kaya* of the essence of enlightenment.

So ends the twelfth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which reveals that the primordial state of Body, Voice, and Mind is beyond seeking.

CHAPTER 13
Behavior and Activity

This chapter explains the extraordinary behavior and enlightened activity [that are based on the understanding] of the primordial state.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!
Attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy are the great Vajrayana itself.
To kill without compassion, to [engage in] sexual union without fear, to eat without [consideration of] pure and impure, and to offer one's semen to one's self are the nature of Vajrayana.
To be merciless to sentient beings, to steal, [to engage in] sexual misconduct, and not to beg from others are the commitments of Vajrayana.[68] They are the spontaneously arisen primordial state, the real state of the Victorious Ones, which always abides in the mandala of bliss and clarity. This is the marvelous secret of the Vajrayana.

Whoever desires supreme enlightenment should always worship one's self,
One should worship it graciously, with all types of offerings.
The wish-fulfilling precious gem, and so on, are to be offered to one's self, and not to the Buddha.
In all buddhafields, one's self is the universal deity; thus, one should worship it with all manner of offerings.[69]
Killing all sentient beings pleases[70] the Victorious Ones, because [such beings] are reborn as their children.[71]
[One should] always satisfy the sexual desire [of others]. This is the secret primordial state that can never be lost. This is the attainment of enlightenment.
Mahasattva, listen!
Even if the *sugatas* of the three times who have knowledge of the marvelous [state] were to swiftly run for an infinite period of time, they could arrive at no place but my ultimate expanse of reality. Bow down to me: I am beyond existence and the void of nonexistence.[72]
Bow down to me, the supreme wisdom dimension of all [buddhas] who, opening the mouth of wisdom, definitely destroy the foundation for the millions of hearts that, troubled by ignorance, affirm the view of [concrete] reality.[73]
Bow down to me, [for] in the age of extinction, I am the inconceivable and unbearably frightful form of the *kalpa's* blazing fire.[74]
Bow down to me, [for I] thirst for an infinite ocean of blood, since the innumerable

torrential floods at the *kalpa's* [end] that terrify all world systems do not even wet the tip of my tongue.

Bow down to me, for I possess a Body that with the sound of just a tip of a hair can control the powerful winds of the swirling cyclones that shatter everything and toss all world systems about, splintering all three worlds and three spheres of existence.

In this world, one who kills just a few gods and men is known by all as a terrifier. But then, how should one like me—who consumes and terrifies all the animate and inanimate—be called? I have consumed all buddhas, yet I am unsatiated.

Bow down to me, [for I], hidden from sight and thirsting [for their blood], have yet to consume all sentient beings.[75]

Why should one like me, so hard to oppose, who causes the departure of the individual consciousness and spawns many children, be called Samantabhadra [the Always Good]?

Although the Body dimension is explained through infinite examples, these are only methods [to lead] uncultivated ones [to the real principle].

Since the *siddhis* of Body, Voice, and Mind, however described or conceived, [already] exist in one's self, one should unite with one's delightful self.

For the wise, the offerings arise from one's self. The offerings that arise from one's self should be offered by oneself to one's self.

The wise always emit the semen of one's self through the principle of union.[76] This is the nature of enlightenment. This is the sky-like behavior. This is the marvelous behavior of Vajrayana.

So ends the thirteenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which [explains] behavior and enlightened activity.

CHAPTER 14
The Marvelous Secret

This chapter explains the marvelous secret.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

If one adorns one's body with the semen that arises from one's self, one beholds the Buddha, [77] and it is delightful. Thus the world systems come under one's sway.
One's body is the deity of mantra. By always worshiping it, one attains enlightenment. Whoever worships it attains the *siddhis*.
The voice and the mind, too, are symbols [of the deity]. Any type of conduct is the *nirmanakaya*.
[Since] the supreme *siddhis* manifest from one's self, enlightenment is swiftly achieved.
The body and the voice, too, are the Secret Mantra, abiding evenly like space.
The mind has no identity to be perceived;[78] thus, the contemplation of the deity and the Secret Mantra [methods] have no identifiable essence on which to focus [one's practice].

Listen, Mahasattva!
When one abides in the essence of enlightenment, the condition of emptiness is not [experienced] as an object; thus, one does not even dwell [in emptiness].[79]
In the primordial state there exists no mind that strives to attain enlightenment; thus, one does not dwell [in that mind].
In all the phenomena of existence, there is no existence; thus, one does not dwell [in existence].
Since there is no mind in the true nature of reality, [this nature] is utterly pure and nondual.
Since all sentient beings are perfectly enlightened, mental activity is perfect enlightenment.[80]
Since all sentient beings are the wisdom deity of the supreme secret mandala, they are the secret manifestation of all the buddhas.
Since the five great elements that originate from me are the deities of the secret mandala of wisdom, the *siddhis* are not to be received from elsewhere: this is the great secret of the *sugatas* of the three times.

Mahasattva!
The primordial state of all buddhas has arisen from me, the Mind of all buddhas.[81] For this reason, the primordial state of all buddhas abides in the Mind of all

buddhas.[82]

Sattva!
You should understand in this way.

Then Vajrasattva entered the amazing contemplation and spoke these words:

The primordial state of all buddhas abides in the Mind of the buddhas.[83]
Through my knowledge, I, Vajrasattva [have understood that] the condition of transcendent primordial wisdom is always identical throughout the three times.[84]

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva! It is really like that!
This wisdom of He Who Manifests Form [Vairocana] abides in the Mind of the *sugatas*. It is not to be found in the letters of any [scripture], yet it becomes manifest clearly in the mind.
The awareness of the fortunate ones is the supreme letter that is the great meaning; it springs forth from within, and has no birth.[85]
Mahasattva!
All the billion world systems of the universe are the wisdom dimension of all buddhas.
The primordial state of all buddhas is immaculate. That is why I have spoken these words.
The primordial state of all buddhas that arises solely from wisdom[86] is discovered by the buddhas themselves.
This is the secret of all the *sugatas*.

So ends the fourteenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the marvelous secret.

CHAPTER 15
The Definitive Crucial Teaching

This chapter explains the definitive crucial teaching on the Primordial State.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva! Listen!

The secret tantras of the *sugatas* have three essential points: the meaning, the crucial teaching, and the definitive secret [instruction].

The meaning refers to the ascertainment of the definitive meaning, not to the provisional meaning. In this regard, the *sugatas*, the phenomena of the world, and its inhabitants who pervade space, that is, all phenomena in the universe of a billion world systems without exception, are identical in that they are Body, Voice, and Mind.

The essence of Body, Voice, and Mind is indivisible: it cannot be destroyed, cannot be cut, and cannot be split by anything; thus, it is the *vajra* [indestructible nature]. Since no thing or phenomenon exists that is not included in Body, Voice, and Mind, everything is definitely understood to be self-perfected in Body, Voice, and Mind. That is why [the expressions] *vajra* phenomena and Vajrayana are used.

The crucial teaching must be understood in meditation. Meditation is the identity or nonduality of the deity and one's self.

Regarding that which must be understood,

The real meaning of all phenomena must be unerringly understood.

The nature of one's self must be unerringly understood.

The view must be unerringly understood.

The secret tantra of the Mind of Vajrasattva must be unerringly understood.

The nature of Vajrasattva must be unerringly understood.

The qualities of Vajrasattva, the manifestation, and the great, complete manifestation of Vajrasattva must be unerringly understood.

The behavior of Vajrasattva, that he governs the true nature of reality through the great enjoyment must be unerringly understood.

The definitive secret instruction is the meaning of the marvelous [state]. The marvelous secret is that all phenomena originate from me, are created by me, expand from me, and I manifest in them. They emanate from me and are reabsorbed into the expanse [of my nature].

I enjoy myself in all phenomena that originate from me. I reveal and proclaim the greatness of myself in the qualities [that arise from me]. I show the total self in the phenomena that originate from me. As to their arising, phenomena originate from me and are reabsorbed into [my] expanse. Not a single phenomenon exists that does not originate from me or is not me.

So ends the fifteenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the crucial teaching of the secret marvelous primordial state.

CHAPTER 16
The Secret Marvelous Mandala

This chapter will explain the secret marvelous mandala.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

What is the Mind of all buddhas? It is the source of all *sugatas.*
The eight classes of consciousness of sentient beings are the wisdom deities arising from one's self, the wisdom mandala in which all secrets are unified. The eight classes of consciousness are the eight offering goddesses[87] and the eight substances for [implementing] the *siddhis*.[88]
Mahasattva!
The consciousnesses of the five doors are as follows: the door of profound knowledge, the door that does not obstruct the completion of the secret tantras, the door that turns the wheel of the Dharma, the door that is Body, Voice, and Mind, and the door that possesses the fruit.

The mandala of the mind that clearly manifests in the five sense consciousnesses of sentient beings is the secret of the secret mandala of the great gathering of the wheel of letters.[89]
This is [the mandala] of the objects of consciousness, the senses, and the classes of consciousness: the deity of the mind that transcends major and minor marks [of a supreme *nirmanakaya*].[90]
Therefore, the voice is the dimension of the past. The body is the dimension of the present. The mind is the dimension of the future.[91]
The voice is the path of the past. The body is the path of the present. The mind is the path of the future.
The voice is the domain [of knowledge] of the past. The body is the domain of the present. The mind is the domain of the future.
Mahasattva!
For this reason, the domain of knowledge of the buddhas is the secret abode of the buddhas.

So ends the sixteenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the secret marvelous mandala.

CHAPTER 17
The Marvelous Mandala of Total Bliss

This chapter explains the marvelous mandala.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mind, the expanse of sameness of the natural condition, is the authentic knowledge of the buddhas.
The perfect, natural condition devoid of identity is the pure path beyond letters.[92] But since there is nowhere to go; there is no path.
The five [sense] objects of experience are the ornaments of the manifestation of wisdom.
Attachment, anger, and ignorance are the path of wisdom from which the buddhas arise. They are the primordial state of Body, Voice, and Mind.
The primordial state is the path of liberation, the path for beings afflicted by emotions who remain [confined] in the ocean of transmigration. Due to its great method, the primordial state is the only secret capable [of liberating beings].
The great offering is total bliss. The great attachment is the supreme joy.
The great offering is total anger. The total anger is perfect enlightenment.
The great offering is total ignorance. The ignorant mind dispels ignorance.
The great offering is total jealousy. Total jealousy is the supreme joy.
The great offering is total pride. Total pride is the supreme pride.[93]

Listen, Mahasattva!
The abode of hell has never existed except as a place for the primordial state to manifest itself so that the compassionate energy of the Tathagata might be displayed. There is no cause for hell, nor has it any reality.
Mahasattva!
Unborn phenomena will never be born.
The mind of the buddhas and of sentient beings is nondual and thus identical.
The infinite, limitless, billion world systems of the universe are the utterly pure buddhafields.[94]
In the billion world systems of the universe, neither samsara nor nirvana exist: they are the mandala from which arises the true nature of reality that is total bliss.[95]
For this reason, the wisdom of the primordial state is clearly manifest in the Mind of all buddhas. It transcends objects conceived by consciousness and abides in the Mind of all buddhas as the supreme secret bliss. This is the secret primordial state.

So ends the seventeenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which

[explains] the marvelous mandala of total bliss.

CHAPTER 18
The Marvelous Mandala

This chapter explains the marvelous mandala.

Again [the Bhagavan] said:

Mahasattva!
You know the authentic state of a buddha, [96]
And always abide in the state of enlightenment.
Like space, you have no attachment.[97]
Dwelling nowhere, you are the ultimate.
You know [the real] nature of the five aggregates.[98]
You also understand the inalienable state,
And abide on the changeless path.
You know the meaning of the lack of inherent nature,
And abide on the path of the lack of inherent nature.

In the unborn essence of your mind, there is no cause for birth as a sentient being.
Since you have no ignorance, for you there is no samsara.
Without entering nirvana, you remain forever;
There is no path to nirvana.

The phenomena of existence have no inherent reality.
The nature of all phenomena exists solely as the purity of body, voice, and mind.
Since there are no sentient beings, there are no buddhas.
Not dwelling on the path of enlightenment,
Unstained by the defects of samsara,
You abide at the gate of complete liberation.

Then, out of faith, all buddhas gathered around the Bhagavan, the Great Vairocana, who was abiding in the essence of enlightenment, and as with one voice they spoke:

Sage of the World! Perfect Buddha!
You have taught that those who, at the beginning, meditate on the unsurpassable mandala of the primordial state dwell in the essence of enlightenment.
For the benefit of all, please explain the deeds of the present, past, and future buddhas renowned in the world.

Then with these words, [the Bhagavan] perfectly explained that which the buddhas, the protectors, had requested:

The sole medicine that benefits sentient beings living in the three worlds is the primordial state; there is no other.
Once the principle of the primordial state is recognized, the cause for the phenomena of samsara no longer exists, and therefore enlightenment is quickly attained and one abides in the bliss that neither arises nor ceases.[99]
The authentic essence that manifests through the secret [states] of Body, Voice, and Mind is called the primordial state. The recognition of its manifestation is called the marvelous primordial state.
This supreme, secret jewel is the mandala of the buddhas [and] the secret of the buddhas. It is the path unsurpassable in the three worlds.
Since all the [various] levels [of realization][100] are indivisible, [all] levels are that of the state of enlightenment.
Yogins who have total awareness of their own state meditate on all secret principles as one.
Wisdom, being spontaneously arisen, is the primordial state.
All buddhas are manifested by [their real] state.
All wisdom deities arise from one's self.
This is the marvelous Body dimension, the supreme secret mandala.

There is no need to recite mantras or to offer service [to the deity].
There is no need to generate the [altruistic intent] of the mind of enlightenment.[101]
There is no need to invoke the deity from outside. Offerings are not presented to someone else. The *siddhis* are not to be requested from someone else.[102]
The primordial state of all buddhas is the understanding of the unsurpassable [reality].
What is the wisdom taught by the Victorious One? The Buddha himself does not know: this is said to be the essence of the mandala.

Mahasattva!
This secret supreme mandala is known by the buddhas.
The actions of the manifold sentient beings are the supreme secret, which is the activity of the buddhas themselves.[103]

So ends the eighteenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the marvelous mandala.

CHAPTER 19
Meditation

This chapter explains the meaning of meditation on the primordial state.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

For the person who has discovered the gem of the three worlds, whatever is wished for is realized, and this world becomes the wish-fulfilling precious [gem].[104]

Mahasattva!
The universe of a billion world systems is the wish-fulfilling precious gem.

Hearing those words, the Hero Vajrasattva felt awe and fear, and rising from his seat, made various offerings.
He spoke these words of joy:

With a joyful mind I praise you, Vairocana, who possesses the victorious *vajra* eye.
Enlightened before all buddhas, you have absolutely no stain of unknowing.
Like a glorious conqueror, you possess the glory of wealth and power.
With a radiant complexion and the magnificence of a *vajra* sun, smiling, and [displaying] wonderful deeds, you are the most marvelous delight.
All the buddhas, who understand phenomena [like] a lotus in full bloom, delight in the primordial state. Understanding the real principle in one instant and thus becoming the very essence of enlightenment, they reawaken at Vajrasana.
The primordial state whose [realization] is perfected in this path is happiness in this life, happiness in the future, and the happiness of the buddhas; it is perfected in the state of enlightenment, and thus [bestows] fortune equal to that of the buddhas.[105]

The unsurpassable Teacher smiled, showing that he was very pleased. Thus he taught the secret lamp of the Mind:

Meditation on the marvelous primordial state quickly brings beings to enlightenment because the unborn, marvelous primordial state is not stained by emotions and karma.
This primordial state is enlightenment itself.
Without gathering the accumulations,[106] it is instantly perfected.
As one's essence is the natural mantra, the essence of the practice is not lost.
When one realizes one's own essence, anything one wishes is the self-perfected

dimension.[107]
One meditates on one's self; one does not meditate on the Buddha.
One expresses one's self; one does not utter the essential [mantra];
One sees one's self; one does not see the Buddha
One sees the three *kayas;* one does not see one's self.
[One sees] bliss; one does not see samsara.

Meditating on one's self as one's deity, merit and wisdom are instantly perfected.
As the natural mantra is perfected in one's essence, the essence of the practice is not lost.
One moves ones limbs; one does not perform mudras.
One invites one's self; one does not invite the Buddha.[108]
One makes offering to one's self; one does not make offerings to the Buddha.
One sees one's self; one does not see the Teacher.[109]
One sees one's master; one does not see the Buddha.
One sees the *dharmakaya*; one does not see form.
One gazes at one's own body; one does not gaze at the minor marks [of the Buddha].

Once authentic wisdom has been recognized through the union [with one's state] from which all the unsurpassable [qualities] arise, oneself in no time becomes one's deity.
This is the glory of all buddhas.
The primordial wisdom of the buddhas is the perfection of all [kinds of] knowledge. Such is the unsurpassable mandala that has been taught by the buddhas, the tathagatas. [Thus] the liberation [taught] in the three vehicles exists as the result of the single vehicle.[110]

So ends the nineteenth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which [explains] the marvelous meditation on the primordial state.

CHAPTER 20
The Marvelous Bliss of the Supreme Secret

This chapter explains the marvelous bliss of the supreme secret.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!
The supreme medicine for living happily and without disease is the primordial state, the supreme medicine for the three times. All the medicines of the world are just this.
That which is manifested by the primordial state, like the bountiful tree that fulfills all desires, through the bliss of enlightenment always becomes the heart of supreme enlightenment.[111]

Mahasattva!
The five aggregates are the five enlightened families; they are the secret mandala in which the five families are complete.
Regarding the authentic mandala, the manifold characteristics of form, variously manifesting, exist as the self-perfected Tathagata family with its male and female deities, male and female bodhisattvas, and so forth.
The meaning of this [mandala] is that it draws together, it congregates, and is utterly complete. In this regard, [since] it draws together and congregates, it is [called] the center. [Since] it appears with individual characteristics, [it is called] the circle.[112]
This is the mandala of the actual and perfect enlightenment of Vairocana of the Tathagata family, the mandala that is victorious over the three worlds.
Its dimension is the *kaya* of spontaneously arisen wisdom that abides in the essence of enlightenment. Its primordial state is the primordial state of the true nature of reality. Its mudra is the mudra of supreme enlightenment. Its faces look in the four directions; therefore, in the secret tantras it is called Vairocana, the Omni-Faced One. Its level [of realization] is the level of supreme wisdom.

Mahasattva!
The various feelings that spontaneously arise from the aggregate of form are the aggregate of feeling, spontaneously perfect as the Jewel (Ratna*)* family with its self-perfected male and female deities, male and female bodhisattvas, and so forth.
Since [this mandala] unifies [everything] while being devoid of inherent nature, it is called the center. [Since] manifold [manifestations] are congregated in it, it is called the circle.
This is the great mandala of the perfect enlightenment of Ratnasambhava called “the source of jewels,” the mandala manifestation of great power.

Its primordial state is the primordial state as the precious Mind. Its mudra is the mudra that bestows power. Its dimension is the *kaya* that is the source of jewels. Its level [of realization] is the level of the great gathering of the wheel of letters.[113]

Mahasattva!

The various perceptions that arise from the aggregate of feeling are the Lotus (Padma) family. That is, the arising of various feelings are the spontaneously perfect Lotus family with its self-perfected male and female deities, male and female bodhisattvas, and so forth. Thus, they are the spontaneously arisen mandala of the true nature of reality, the mandala that sets the wheel of the Dharma in motion, also-called the mandala that is the source of compassionate energy.

Its dimension is the *kaya* of merit. Its primordial state is all-expansive wisdom. Its level [of realization] is the level of *vajra*-holder. Its mudra is the *dharmamudra*.

Mahasattva!

The various actions that arise from the aggregate of perception are the Action (Karma) family; that is, the manifold volitions are the spontaneously present Action family with its male and female deities, male and female bodhisattvas, and so forth. [Its] perfect enlightenment arises from one's self, the mandala that tames living beings.

Its primordial state is the *vajra*. Its dimension is the *sambhogakaya*. Its mudra is the *karmamudra*. Its level [of realization] is the supreme level of Samantabhadra.

Mahasattva!

The various active consciousnesses that naturally arise from the aggregate of volitions are the aggregate of consciousness, the Vajra family.

The manifold consciousnesses are spontaneously perfect as the Vajra family with its male and female deities, male and female bodhisattvas, and so forth. They are the mandala that manifests at the beginning as the perfectly enlightened [Akshobhya], the mandala of the total perfection that is the utterly pure expanse of all [phenomena].

Its primordial state is beyond concepts. Its dimension is the *kaya* of the *vajra* essence. Its mudra is the secret *samayamudra*. Its level [of realization] is the level beyond action.

Mahasattva!

Among the mandalas of the tathagatas, these are the most secret of the great secret [mandalas]. In fact, since in the five aggregates cluster and congregate manifold enlightened families, many male and female deities, many colors, many wisdoms, many [aspects of] Body, many [aspects of] Voice, and many [aspects of] Mind, many hand implements, many mudras, and many mandalas of wisdom, they are

the mandalas of the clusters. Since all secrets are included in them, they are the mandalas that unify [all] secrets.

Thus, the supremely secret, marvelous mandalas, unsurpassable in the three worlds, have been explained. These five mandalas are not constructed in stages. In fact, the five forms [of the five buddhas], spontaneously perfected, are naturally present in any single form meditated upon in the contemplation of the deity, and all five mandalas manifest spontaneously perfected in one single mandala that does not need to be constructed or generated.

The primordial state manifests naturally as the five [aspects of the] primordial state from the unborn true nature of reality, and thus it is the spontaneously arisen, supreme mandala.

Mudras, too, manifest naturally; thus, they are self-originated, supreme mudras. Similarly, dimensions, wisdoms, enlightened families, hand implements, and colors all manifest, completely perfected, from a single [source] and exist naturally.

There is no level of enlightenment unsurpassable in the three worlds that is higher than the supreme marvelous secret; thus [the marvelous state] is the perfect level. In fact, in each living being of the infinite, limitless, inconceivable universe of a billion world systems, the five mandalas are naturally present, and in the characteristics of each of the five great [elements of] the outer world, the five mandalas are perfectly present.

In each of the inconceivable forms of the *sugatas*, the five mandalas are perfectly present. Therefore, they are the marvelous secret itself, the marvelous primordial state, the marvelous mandala, the marvelous view, the marvelous total reality, the marvelous Buddha, the marvelous manifestation and emanation, the marvelous knowledge, the marvelous wisdom, the marvelous total miraculous and magical display, the marvelous activity, the marvelous Body, Voice, and Mind, the marvelous three times, and the marvelous three [spheres of] existence.

So ends the twentieth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the marvelous mandala of the supreme secret.

CHAPTER 21
The Total Bliss of the Supreme Secret

This chapter will explain the total bliss of the supreme secret.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Mahasattva!

Therefore, what could ever be a cause of birth for sentient beings who are not

buddhas?

What phenomena and true nature of phenomena concretely exist that are not the primordial state?

All mandalas defined as such are included in me, the perfect mandala.[114]

Whatever is called mandala is the wisdom mandala that abides in the Mind.

Supreme *vajra* wisdom is revealed in the union with one's state.

Everything is the spontaneously arisen mandala.

Not even the Buddha possesses a quality that is not included in the five mandalas.

Listen, Mahasattva!

All sentient beings that are born are buddhas beyond birth, utterly pure in the expanse [of the true nature of reality].

This essence of the primordial state was taught by the secret Buddha.

Why was it taught to the buddhas?

The primordial state is like a razor, like a sword tempered in sesame oil.[115] The primordial state is the universal path. Like a lotus, it is unstained by [the mud of] defects; it is like the fire [at the end] of the *kalpa*: regardless of the suffering [experienced] and evil action committed, one will accomplish the unsurpassable final attainment of liberation.[116]

The Buddha, Dharma, Samgha, and all unsurpassable [qualities] dwell in my primordial state.

Beyond all major and minor marks, like a wish-fulfilling preciousgem, the Body dimension alone, self-perfected without having to wish for it,[117] exists in these three worlds. That alone is the level of supreme greatness.

In the delight of the supreme secret, all abides as one's self alone.[118]

Since the three worlds do not exist and thus there is no place [for the mind] to abide, mind and the ultimate nature of reality are one.

So ends the twenty-first chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the bliss of the supreme secret.

CHAPTER 22
The Marvelous View

This chapter explains the marvelous view.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

Listen, friends!
The primordial state is the actual Buddha. The one who understands this principle in this way is a yogin who always abides in bliss.
The realm of hell is the unsurpassable path. This is how the place of hell is experienced: the throngs of *yakshas*, *rakshasas*, and *yamas* are seen as buddhas by all [those who have knowledge].
In reality there is no cause of hell; [thus,] hell is seen to be without any cause by all [who have knowledge]. The garlands of flames of hell are the primordial state, and [thus,] harm is quelled.
Therefore, there are no yogins, [but] only buddhas. There is neither a path nor any treading [on a path]. There is no Buddha and no a cause [for the state of Buddha]. There is neither enlightenment nor a name [for it, and] there is no level of enlightenment. There are no sentient beings nor is there any life. There are no emotions and no samsara. There is no bliss and no final attainment. There is no hope and no fear. There is no dwelling and no place [to dwell]. There is no vehicle and no entrance. There is no aspiration and no practice. There is no abandonment and no acceptance.
Since there is no place for the mind [essence] to abide, [the mind essence] is the primordial state that cannot be meditated upon.[119]

So ends the twenty-second chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the supreme and secret marvelous view.

CHAPTER 23
Realization Without Effort

This chapter explains the reason for the absence of seeking, the reason for the realization without effort.

The Mahasattva said:

Bhagavan!
It is a great wonder that I and all the *sugatas* did not previously see or understand [this principle].
This supremely secret Dharma is different from the [other] vehicles of the tathagatas. It is not the same as any vehicle of the Secret Mantra. It is a teaching not shared by any vehicle [and one in which] there are no phenomena or nature of phenomena that are not the primordial state. Since [in this teaching] the word Buddha does not exist, neither does the term sentient being. Apart from [teaching] the delightful manifestation of energy, not even the word suffering exists.
The wheel of phenomena of cyclic existence that turns within the very state of Body, Voice, and Mind is not samsara. Therefore, the cause of samsara and of the phenomena of samsara have never existed.
This teaching leads directly to the level of enlightenment, therefore it does not even speak of hell. In this teaching only omniscience exists, therefore it does not even speak of ignorance. This is a Dharma in which one understands the real meaning without mistakes.
For the benefit of all the *sugatas* of the three times and for my [benefit], you have taught in its entirety the secret instruction of the marvelous secret, the secret lamp of the precious primordial state, and thus you have explained the marvelous primordial state that is the real meaning of one's self.
[Now my question is,] what is the cause of the omniscience [of a buddha]?

The Bhagavan, the All-Knowing Dharma Lord, spoke:

Mahasatttva! Listen!
The Buddha, the Bhagavan, is omniscient because he has perfectly gathered the boundless accumulation of infinite merit.[120]
The fully enlightened Buddha is omniscient because he is the source of boundless qualities.
The fully enlightened Buddha is omniscient because he has perfected infinite, authentic methods.
The Buddha, the Bhagavan, is omniscient because he possesses unexcelled wisdom.

The Buddha, the Bhagavan, is omniscient because he has gathered boundless knowledge of *prajna*.
The Buddha, the Bhagavan, [possesses] measureless activities.
The Buddha, the Bhagavan, causes countless beings to become worthy receptacles.
The Buddha, the Bhagavan, teaches in accordance with reality and acts accordingly. He works for the benefit of sentient beings in accordance with their condition. He works for the benefit of sentient beings according to their inclinations and, being omniscient, teaches considering the disciples' [capacities].

Mahasattva!
Voice is the *vajra* speech.
Union is the understanding that body, voice, and mind are not separate but indivisible and without distinctions. It is [called] union because it gives rise to this understanding.
Liberation is the indestructible nature that is the indivisibility of body, voice, and mind, the *vajra* that does not abide anywhere. This is [the meaning of] liberation.[121]
Listen!
This ultimate essence of all phenomena is a great wonder.
I am the yoga of *prajnaparamita*. If there were no *prajnaparamita*, the [other] nine *paramitas*[122] would have no sense and there would be no path to liberation. Since there would be nothing to guard [as the secret essence], one would not be at the level of a yogin, and all would be pointless.

Then [the Bhagavan] entered the manifest contemplation, and again spoke:

For the Tathagata, in all phenomena there is no enlightenment, and the so-called expanse of the true nature of reality does not exist. This nonexistence itself is the ultimate expanse of the true nature of reality.
When one becomes expert in all views, all training collapses. Any form of training is not [the real] training. Not training in anything is the training of me, the wise one.[123]
Those who desire enlightenment do not attain enlightenment and are far from the supreme enlightenment like the earth and sky [are far from one another].[124]
One who understands this true nature of reality quickly attains enlightenment.

So ends the twenty-third chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* which explains realization without effort.

CHAPTER 24
All Qualities Are Perfected in the Body

This chapter explains that, since one never has one's fill of gazing upon the Body dimension, all qualities are perfected in the Body.

Then [the Teacher] entered the contemplation called Abiding on the Tenth Level, and spoke as follows:

The primordial state in which the ten *paramitas*[125] are spontaneously perfected is marvelous.
This marvelous primordial state is the perfection of all phenomena, the treasury of all phenomena, the inexhaustible treasury, the perfect and complete enlightenment in the unsurpassable primordial state.
Even the Tathagata, the fully enlightened Buddha, is nothing but this *prajnaparamita*. This ultimate nature of all phenomena is a great wonder.

As to the difference between the path and the fruit, what is attained by a bodhisattva is the knowledge of all, and thus knowledge. What is attained by a buddha is the wisdom of omniscience, and thus primordial wisdom.
I always enjoy the phenomena originating from the body. I enjoy the phenomena originating from the mind. I enjoy the phenomena originating from the voice. I enjoy the phenomena originating from the phenomena. I perfectly understand [everything] distinctly, without impediment, as if it were a brocade from Varanasi.[126]

Once again [the Bhagavan], having revealed the secret instruction on the primordial state, proclaimed the ultimate meaning:

Vajrasattva!
Since no meditational deity exists,[127] the lord of yogins does not need to depend upon another.
The primordial state that is difficult to find is the dimension of the Victorious One.
Difficult to realize [even] for the buddhas of the three times, the total awareness of one's self arises from this expanse [that is the marvelous primordial state]. Enlightenment does not exist elsewhere.

So ends the twenty-fourth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* which [explains that] all qualities are perfected in the Body.

CHAPTER 25
Commitments

This chapter explains the commitments to be observed.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

The eight commitments of the marvelous primordial state are: primordially unborn, primordially nonarisen, primordially nonabiding, primordially empty, primordially nonexistent, all-pervasive, single, and self-perfected.
Thus [the primordial state], having no birth, never dies.
Since it has never appeared, it does not disappear.
Since it does not abide [anywhere], it is nirvana.
Free of subject and object, it is primordially empty.[128]
Nonexistent, it is the commitment.
Maintaining this single [principle], all [commitments] are observed.
Being all-pervasive, the commitments are beyond division and enumeration.
Being the universe of a thousand world systems,[129] there is nothing higher; thus, the single [state] is the commitment of Atiyoga.
Eternal and immutable, it is unchanging and self-perfected.
The commitments of the marvelous state can also be reckoned as twenty-five.[130]

[The commitments] in which there is nothing to observe are understood as three [of Body, Voice and Mind]:
Mind has no unknowing, and thus, since it understands all, [no commitments] need to be observed.
Nothing exists that is not perfectly contained in Voice; thus, [no commitments] need to be observed.
In the Body everything is spontaneously perfect, and its enjoyment is not impeded by anything; thus, no commitments [need to be observed].
For this reason, all [commitments of] Body, Voice, and Mind that require no observance are understood without having to be learned.
Since all [commitments] are not to be observed, and all that is to be maintained is [already] complete, there is no [commitment] to be observed.
The five Body dimensions are self-perfected [and their commitments] are beyond the necessity of being observed.
I possess the supreme, unexcelled wisdom and all the perfect qualities of greatness; thus, I am this marvelous primordial state, completely victorious over the three

worlds.

From the collection of the great secret [scriptures], the knowledge of Vajrasattva, the most supreme of all secrets, has been taught.

So ends the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Marvelous Primordial State*, a teaching, the quintessence of all secrets, explaining the commitments that do not have to be observed.

CHAPTER 26
Amending Mistakes and Violations

This chapter explains how the principle of the marvelous primordial state amends all mistakes and violations [of the commitments].

Vajrasattva asked the Teacher:

What is the energy of [this] marvelous total reality like?

The All-Knowing Dharma Lord, the Teacher, spoke:

[Like] a great thunderbolt of meteoric iron that [destroys] a thousand mountains [in an instant], [the understanding of the primordial state] can destroy from the top down a snow mountain of mistakes so that it melts and collects in an ocean of nectar. [131]

Through the vastness of one hundred thousand contemplations, thanks to this [primordial state] there can be no violations [of the commitments].

Vajrasattva addressed the Teacher again, saying:

[In this regard, why] does the tantra of the secret Mind speak of all the atoms of the realms with the two hundred seventy Mount Merus [that manifest] in the *kalpas*?

The Teacher, the All-Knowing Dharma Lord[, spoke]:

The entire universe of a billion world systems has the same nature as the marvelous state. In fact, through [the power of the] marvelous primordial state, the *vajra* of meditation can pulverize even those two hundred seventy Mount Merus.[132]

Thus, he spoke.
[The Bhagavan again said:]

For this reason, the Body dimension of the marvelous primordial state is called "the universe of a thousand world systems." Voice is called "wisdom manifesting in space." Mind is called "that which resembles a *vajra* chisel in the meadow of the sky." [133]

Furthermore, the marvelous Body is called "the Body dimension that abides in the essence of enlightenment." The marvelous Voice abiding in the essence of

enlightenment is called “that which truly unravels the sense [of the Teaching].” The marvelous Mind is the wish-fulfilling Mind of inexhaustible intelligence, “the wisdom Mind; the supreme Mind.”

Thus he spoke.
[Again the Teacher said:]

Moreover, the tantra of the secret Mind states: “From the Body of the sky [arises] the marvelous [manifestation]. The Voice of the sky is the revelation of the path. The Mind of the sky is the supreme Mind. The marvelous sky is the supreme abode.”[134]

Thus the Body, Voice, and Mind of the sky are explained.

Then, the Body, Voice and Mind of the earth [or material dimension][135] are explained in the following way:

The Body of the earth—[that is, the material dimension] consisting of the two hundred seventy Mount Merus and of all the atoms existing in the realms [that appear] in the *kalpas*—is the dimension of the marvelous state that is the universe of a billion world systems. The worlds of this earth have one hundred thousand Mount Merus for each of [their] two hundred seventy Mount Merus.[136] In each single atom existing in the realms [that appear] in the *kalpas*, the marvelous primordial state is measureless: it [manifests] as Mount Meru, continents, and earth, and all that appears and exists, including all beings living within [this dimension].

Were all this to be devoured, I am the one who would not be devoured: this is who I am.[137]

So ends the twenty-sixth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* [which explains] the amending of mistakes and violations.

CHAPTER 27
The Distinction Between Lights

This chapter will explain the distinction between lights.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

The Body dimension of the marvelous primordial state blazes as firelight: attachment blazes as light,[138] anger blazes as light, pride blazes as light, jealousy blazes as light, and ignorance blazes as light.

In the same way, the five aggregates that are the five Body dimensions blaze as light, and these [lights] are the five Body dimensions of the marvelous primordial state, shining from within one's self.

Similarly, the five consciousnesses also blaze as light: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and mental [consciousnesses] blaze as light.

Likewise, the five external objects[139] also blaze as light. All the five [elements] of earth, water, fire, air, and space blaze as light.

[Yet,] greater and more luminous is the light of wisdom, the total light issuing from the luminosity of the king that is one's awareness, the marvelous primordial state. Therefore, all world systems are said to arise and manifest clearly from the light of one's awareness.

Through that [awareness], the darkness of samsara is overcome by light, and thus [samsara], beyond suffering from the beginning, is called enlightenment.

These lights are the lights of the marvelous state.

For the [the beings who experience the] suffering of birth, old age, decay, and death, the marvelous primordial state that is total bliss is the supreme medicine for [assuring] a happy and healthy life. It transcends the three times and the three worlds; thus, it is called nirvana.

[In this way,] the Teacher, while abiding in the essence of enlightenment, gazing at Vajrasattva, gave [the above] teachings on the marvelous reality called the marvelous primordial state. During that time, in the blissful pure land of the nondual palace of Alakavati,[140] the Bhagavan did not mention even the words effort or gradual progress from one the level to another of the noble *shravakas*, the *pratyekabuddhas*, and the [followers] of the Mahayana sutras [who are submerged] in the ocean of the suffering of searching.

He revealed the meaning of the unsurpassable Great Vehicle of the Secret Mantra, and since the buddhas of the five families, the *sugatas* of the three times, and [their] state of realization are clear and pure in the sphere of the true nature of reality, through the nondual union of male and female bodhisattvas[141] and by means of the principle of noneffort, he dried up the ocean of the suffering of searching. Thus [he taught] that the total vision of wisdom perfectly arises from awareness, and this corresponds to the fundamental meaning [of this teaching].

The meaning of the words [of this teaching] has three aspects: presentation of

the greatness of the principle [of the primordial state] in a few words; presentation of the final attainment as Body, Voice, and Mind; and presentation [of the principle] in elegant verses.

As to [the presentation of] the meaning [in a few] words, this Marvelous Primordial State is proclaimed by the Bhagavan, the glorious Samantabhadra, from within the expanse of the blissful state of his Mind, for the sake of the *sugatas* of the three times, by extending his tongue from the secret mandala of his Mind. [His words] represent the literal meaning.

As to the presentation of the final attainment as Body, Voice, and Mind[, it is said]:

> It exists from the beginning and abides forever.
> Unchanging, it is the *kaya*.
> Inconceivable, it is the *nirmanakaya*.
> Self-perfected, it is the *sambhogakaya*.
> Beyond action and searching, it is the *kaya* that abides in the essence of enlightenment.
> As it is the source of the manifestation of the variety, it is the *kaya* of the very nature of wisdom.

From these and other such [statements extolling] the special qualities of [the Secret] Mantra, the *kaya* of the expanse of the ultimate reality of the *sugatas* is comprehended. From this *dharmakaya*, the light of wisdom manifests.

Accordingly, this light—through the wisdom and the *kaya* of the expanse of the true nature of the universe of a billion [world systems]—pervades all world systems without exception, manifesting as an immense emptiness.

The light of the marvelous Buddha is inconceivable. It is the light of wisdom that enables one to see the marvelous primordial state; therefore it is called the marvelous light.

[Then] the Lord Vajrasattva asked the All-Knowing Dharma Lord:

> What is the *dharmakaya*, and what is the light that manifests from wisdom?

And the Buddha spoke:

> It is like this. By reducing the world systems of the ten directions to infinitesimal particles, the *dharmakaya* is revealed. The marvelous primordial state is the *dharmakaya*. The light of wisdom is as vast as this. Likewise, the light of wisdom is inconceivable.

Since the three [realms of] existence are of the nature of the sky, they shine as a sphere of light.
The light of the [primordial] energy in all sentient beings is as infinite as the realms [that appear in the] *kalpas*.
The light of that which experiences and does not experience, of the animate and the inanimate, and of the mind and awareness, is the marvelous [primordial state].

Thus he spoke.

[The Bhagavan spoke:]

No matter how much light manifests from the buddhas, it is not as bright as the supremely brilliant light of wisdom of one's awareness. Therefore, this light is unlike the light of the sky, sun, and moon. It is superior to all the other [lights].

So he spoke.

So ends the twenty-seventh chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* which [explains] the distinction between lights.

CHAPTER 28
The Five Paths of Samsara

This chapter explains the five paths of samsara.

Then, Vajrasattva asked:

> What are the five paths of samsara?

The Teacher, the All-Knowing Dharma Lord, said:

> Out of attachment, one takes.
> Out of anger, one kills.
> Out of jealousy, one separates.
> Out of pride, one beats.
> Ignorance reveals the path of phenomena.[142]
> If unrecognized, attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy are the root of the three poisons. Recognized, they are the path of enlightenment.
> They manifest [as the wisdom of] the Glorious Jewel [Ratnasambhava], the Nonattached [Amitabha], the Accomplisher [Amoghasiddhi], the Indestructible [Akshobhya], and the Tathagata [Vairocana].

So ends of the twenty-eighth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the five paths of samsara.

CHAPTER 29
The Five Paths as the Expanse of the True Nature of the Five Female Buddhas

This chapter explains that the five paths of samsara are the expanse [of the true nature] of the five families and the five female buddhas.

Then, Vajrasattva asked [to know] more on the question [addressed] in the previous chapter, and the All-Knowing Dharma Lord, the Teacher, said:

> Taking what is not given is earth.
> Sexual misconduct is water.
> Lying is air.
> Killing is fire.
> All is revealed as the expanse of space.[143]

Thus, he spoke.

So ends the twenty-ninth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the five paths as the expanse [of the true nature] of the five families and of the five female [buddhas] of the five families.

CHAPTER 30
The Pure Realm That Has No Cause and Effect

This chapter explains that since the causes and effects of samsara are pure from the beginning, they are the pure realm beyond attachment.

The root of the three poisons having been cut, in me there is no cause and effect of the three worlds.
I am the *heruka*[144] who kills that which has no life.
Beyond attachment and grasping, [I am encircled by] the eight unfettered charnel grounds.[145]
[My pure realm] cannot be left, cannot be entered, has no objects, and is devoid of sense organs.
Devoid of outer and inner, gateway and interior, it is the great vastness of the inner reality.[146]
Beyond Body, Voice, and Mind, it is the supreme greatness. Beyond mantra and mudra, it knows no violations [of commitments].
Perfect as the total greatness, it is marvelous.

Thus spoke the Buddha, the All-Knowing Dharma Lord.

So ends the thirtieth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the causes and effects of samsara as the Pure Ream.

CHAPTER 31
The Utter Purity of All Phenomena

This chapter explains that all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are the utterly pure expanse [of the true nature of reality].

The Teacher, the Bhagavan Buddha, the Sugata, seeing that all phenomena of samsara and nirvana abide in the utterly pure expanse [of the true nature of reality], realized and perfectly comprehended the principle of nonduality. Understanding that sentient beings and their true nature and samsara and nirvana are nondual, he transcended all concepts and remained immovable. Within that state he revealed that the real principle of the marvelous primordial state is beyond center or borders.

So ends the thirty-first chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains [how] the marvelous primordial state is beyond center or borders.

CHAPTER 32
Primordially Present Total Wisdom

This chapter explains the natural and primordial presence of total wisdom.

Moreover, [the Bhagavan] taught that since the true nature of reality is spontaneously present as total enlightenment, [and since] the expanse [of the true nature of reality] and wisdom are beyond union or separation, the aim of all yogas is included in Atiyoga, and the principle of Atiyoga is contained in the marvelous primordial state.

So ends the thirty-second chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* [which explains] that all yogas are contained in Atiyoga.

CHAPTER 33
Primordial Enlightenment

This chapter explains that all phenomena are from the beginning in a state of enlightenment and reveals the King who abides immovable in the expanse of nirvana.

In the expanse of nirvana that is primordial enlightenment, the King of Nonconceptuality[147] revealed that, although he abides with no above, below, or spatial limitation, through the great [primordial] energy of wisdom, he manifests all possible emanations and [demonstrates] how they unify everything in the pure dimension and liberate all in the pure ultimate [space].

Transcending the three worlds, he dwells in the state of Samantabhadra, the Precious One, who does not move, does not change, does not transmigrate, and does not abide anywhere.

So ends the thirty-third chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* [which explains] the immovable, unchangeable state.

CHAPTER 34
From the Light of the Body and the Rays of the Voice

This chapter explains how, from within the expanse of total bliss, [the manifestation] arises from the light of the Body and the rays of the Voice.

From within the vast expanse of total bliss of the primordial state, through the light of the Body and the rays of the Voice, the All-Knowing, the Lord of Dharma, abiding inseparably with his consort the Queen of Desire, revealed that all appearance and existence are the state of [primordial] energy, and moreover, that the phenomena of samsara and all existence are perfect enlightenment.

So ends the thirty-fourth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, [which teaches] how [manifestation] arises from the light of the Body and the rays of the Voice.

CHAPTER 35
Primordial Nirvana

This chapter explains how all phenomena are primordial nirvana.

With regard to the primordial state as nirvana, there are three points:

From within the expanse of primordial enlightenment, the King of Nonconceptuality abides without thoughts as the wisdom of the great [primordial] energy.

[He possesses] the unobstructed wisdom that clearly knows the three existences simultaneously and also knows the pure realms.

He is the world and the inhabitants of all [universes], and thus, being the essence of all, he is the true nature of the *kayas* and wisdoms.

So ends the thirty-fifth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State,* [which explains] that all phenomena are nirvana.

CHAPTER 36
The Purpose of This Teaching

This chapter explains the purpose [of teaching] the Marvelous Primordial State.

[From] the beginning to the end of [the scripture] *The Marvelous Primordial State*, the fundamental purpose [of this teaching] is presented in eight topics that illustrate the final attainment as the self-perfected Body, Voice, and Mind.

These topics are as follows:

1. The nature of the primordial state
2. The primordial state as total pervasiveness
3. The literal meaning of primordial state
4. The meaning of cause and result [in relation to] the primordial state
5. The primordial state as total nirvana
6. The primordial state as the unchangeable condition that is the wisdom of total emptiness
7. The wisdom of total bliss of the primordial state as primordial enlightenment, and thus eternal and immutable
8. The lack of a final [destination] of the primordial state[148]

As to the subdivisions of these topics:[149]

(1.) The nature of the primordial state is explained in two points:
(1.1) All phenomena of appearance and existence, unmodified from the beginning, are the state of enlightenment.
(1.2) If one understands and realizes this, the result is not to be sought elsewhere.

(3.) The literal meaning of primordial state is explained in three points:
(3.1) This definitive crucial teaching or secret instruction reveals the primordial state beyond mental fabrication.
(3.2) It reveals that the primordial state is beyond examples and words and thus transcends the domain of subject and object.
(3.3.) It reveals that no phenomenon is to be found in the world apart from the primordial state.

(4.) The meaning of cause and result [in relation] to the primordial state is explained in four points:

(4.1) In the sphere of the vast expanse of the mother Samantabhadri, who is the cause from which everything originates, the result manifests as Samantabhadra, the primordial state.

(4.2) The awareness that is the nonconceptual wisdom arises from one's self.

(4.3) From the unborn and unceasing condition of reality, the [primordial] energy [manifests] as various skillful means.

(4.4) By meditating on the aggregates, constituents of experience, and sense fields as the Great Symbol of the form of the deity, the awareness of wisdom, the essence uncompounded in the three times, arises in the center of one's own heart.

(8.) The explanation that the primordial state has no final destination has four points:

(8.1) By meditating on method and knowledge [the primordial state] is revealed as the colors and bodily postures of the buddhas of the five families.

(8.2) Clearly present as the expanse [of the true nature of reality] and wisdom, [the primordial state] is devoid of a material form. Thus, beyond the contemplation of coarse [aspects], it is described as a mandala of light.

(8.3) By understanding [the real nature] of consciousness and of the knowable, one can distinctly comprehend the state of enlightenment.

(8.4) All-pervading like space, it is beyond hope and fear, and beyond the phenomena of cyclic existence.

(8.5) Realizing the primordial state that is one's own awareness is the final attainment that never changes in the three times.[150]

(2.) The total pervasiveness of the primordial state is explained in six points:

(2.1) By understanding the meaning of the supreme secret mandala, one reaches the expanse of Narahasa.[151]

(2.2) Beyond union and separation means the transcendence of action and seeking.

(2.3) Once the crucial teaching is thoroughly ascertained, one directly experiences the secret instruction.

(2.4) Abiding by the commitments and precepts, the final attainment of Body, Voice, and Mind is realized.

(2.5) The treasure of the Mind of all Victorious Ones is the marvelous primordial state.

(2.6) However phenomena related to cause and effect may be described, they are the manifestation of the magical display of birth from the unborn essence of the mind.

(5.) The primordial state as nirvana is explained in three points:

(5.1) Although the King of Nonconceptuality abides without any spatial limitations in the expanse of nirvana that is the primordial state of enlightenment, he manifests all possible emanations through his total [primordial] energy.

(5.2) Liberating everything in the pure realm and uniting everything in the womb of the mother [Samantabhadri], he is the great transcendence of the three worlds.

(5.3) Since he does not move, does not change, does not transmigrate, and does not abide anywhere, he never departs from the state of Samantabhadra, the precious Mind.[152]

(6.)The primordial state that transcends all [concepts] in the total emptiness is explained in two points:

(6.1) In the expanse of total bliss, [the primordial state] abides as the light of the Body and displays itself in the rays of the Voice.

(6.2.) The All-Knowing Dharma Lord is nondual with his consort, the Queen of Desire.[153]

(7.) The primordial state as the primordial enlightenment, and [thus] eternal and immutable, is explained in seven points:

(7.1) The ten fields[154] are the pure realms of the Buddha.

(7.2) All appearance and existence are in the state of total [primordial] energy.[155]

(7.3) All phenomena of samsara are the primordial state.[156]

(7.4) The supreme peace of all vehicles is Atiyoga.[157]

(7.5) All phenomena related to cause and effect are the primordial state.

(7.6) [The primordial state] transcends the domain of words and letters.

(7.7) Having cut the root of birth and death[158] through union and liberation, the all-inclusive sphere transcends the extremes of permanence and cessation.[159]

So ends the thirty-sixth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, [which explains] the purpose of the secret instruction.

CHAPTER 37
The Literal Meaning

This chapter explains the literal meaning of the "primordial state [that is total bliss]."[160]

Pure means that [the primordial state] is from the beginning purified of obstacles and traces of past actions. That is, its wisdom knows simultaneously, without any hindrance, the three worlds, the three times, and the three existences as if they were a crystal sphere placed in the palm of the hand; thus, it is limpid, pure, and clear. This is its real meaning.

Total means that just as a sesame seed is permeated with oil, it is the essence of all, the spontaneously existing true nature of reality that is the core of all. Since it is the source of the manifestation of the *kayas* and wisdoms, it is total.

Mind is the wisdom of realization; thus, it is never altered in the secret expanse of the ground of all. This precious jewel that cannot be sought and shines [forth] as natures and colors is the mind that has no birth.

Bliss means that since the three *kayas*, instantly perfected, are completely pure in the expanse of the true nature of reality and abide in the equanimity of total delight, they are bliss.

Total means that, since [the primordial state] cannot be modified by any antidote and, like space, does not depend on causes, it is pure from the beginning. Since it is not related to secondary conditions, it exists from the beginning. Since it does not depend on materiality or characteristics, it is unequalled: for these reasons, it is total.

Mind has three aspects: it pervades everything, it has the characteristics of the mental consciousness, and it is the wisdom of awareness.

Body has three aspects: it is immense space, it is the dimension of omnipresent bliss, and it is the *vajra* of the primordial state.

Voice has three aspects: it is definitive words, it is the content that is communicated, and it expands as everything.

This marvelous primordial state governs the three worlds: since it holds the life of everything, [the three worlds] dissolve in the oceanic expanse of the *bhaga*[161] of Samantabhadri.

The Body, Voice, and Mind [of the buddhas] are self-perfected: having transcended action and seeking, the King of Awareness becomes free, and since

the great manifestation of wisdom appears in oneself, [this manifestation] is reabsorbed in the expanse of total bliss, the sky of Samantabhadri.

From the nonduality [of awareness and manifestation], the unerring principle of the precious mind that has no birth, beyond the conceptual characteristics of words and letters, manifests all possible natures and colors. [Thus], in the vastness of total bliss, the immutable expanse [of the true nature of reality], it is present as the everlasting Body of great eternity.

So ends the thirty-seventh chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which teaches the meaning [of the term] primordial state.

CHAPTER 38
The Benefits of Understanding

This chapter explains the benefits of [understanding] the marvelous primordial state and [thus,] the aim of the meditation on the primordial state.

The statement from the scriptures, “The person who has discovered the jewel of the three worlds” is a metaphor for one who has understood the marvelous primordial state. That is, just as a mountain of agate or of semiprecious stones touched by the light of a lapis lazuli the size of a sheep louse wholly appears as a lapis lazuli [mountain], this manifestation of a thousand world systems of the primordial state in the sky of wisdom is marvelous: all the three worlds are seen as precious, and the three [spheres of] existence, too, become precious.[162] In the same way, [this marvelous primordial state] is like a wish-fulfilling precious jewel from which anything can manifest.

So ends the thirty-eighth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which teaches the qualities of and the meditation on the marvelous state.

CHAPTER 39
Defects of the Student

This chapter explains the defects of the student of the marvelous primordial state.

The scriptures say that those who have entered the lesser vehicles, those who by nature have a low level of intelligence, those who are proud of their slight learning, those who are influenced by corrupt words, those who have weak self-confidence and little faith, those who are arrogant and biased, and those who are so fettered by miserliness that they do not bleed even when cut, should not be taught the principle of the marvelous primordial state.

Even if taught, their minds will not be liberated; therefore, do not give them the perfect crucial teaching of the supreme unsurpassable vehicle, the principle of Atiyoga.

So ends [the thirty-ninth chapter] of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains that students who are bad receptacles should not be taught.

CHAPTER 40
The Reasons for Teaching Qualified Students

This chapter explains through eight extraordinary points [taught] from the beginning [of this text], the reasons for teaching students who are good receptacles.

The scriptures say that an elephant's ability to carry big loads cannot be likened to the strength of an ordinary animal. This power, too, is extraordinary.

The roar of a snow lion cannot be likened to the roar of an ordinary predator. The sound of this voice, too, is extraordinary.

The waves of a great ocean, once seen, cannot be likened to the ripples of an ordinary brook. The waves of this blessing, too, are extraordinary.

The summit of Mount Meru, once reached, cannot be likened to an ordinary hill. This supreme summit, too, is extraordinary.

The light of the sun and moon that illuminate the sky, once seen, cannot be likened to the light of ordinary stars and planets. This luminosity, too, is extraordinary.

The soaring of the eagle, once seen, cannot be likened to that of ordinary birds. This strength, too, is extraordinary.

The profundity of the Vajra vehicle, once seen, cannot be compared to that of ordinary vehicles. This profundity, too, is extraordinary.

A wise individual who has trained his mind and a closed-minded person of little learning are not equal in the benefit they bring to others. The supreme benefit of [the primordial state], too, is extraordinary.

So ends [the fortieth chapter] of *The Total Reality of the Marvelous Primordial State*, which explains the extraordinary qualities [comprising the reasons] for teaching [this marvelous state to] students who are good receptacles.

This concludes *The Marvelous Primordial State.*

Appendix One

The Various Versions of *The Marvelous Primordial State*

The Tsamtrag edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition* contains several texts called *Marvelous* or whose titles contain this word.

The content of three of them appears to be almost identical despite the difference in the number of chapters, namely:

- *The Total Bliss of The Marvelous Primordial State (bDe ba chen po byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba)* in forty-two chapters (henceforth M1) found in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2.[163] Its colophon states, "Translated by the Indian master Shri Simha and the Tibetan translator Vairocana."
- *The Marvelous Primordial State (Byang chub sems kyi rmad du byung ba)* in forty chapters, (henceforth M2), also found in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 2.[164] Its colophon states, "Translated and finalized by the Indian master Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara. Shri Simha and Vairocana previously translated this text. A translation by Jnanagarbha[165] and Yudra Nyingpo also exists."
- *The Marvelous Total Existence* (*Chos chen po rmad du byung ba*) with only twenty chapters (henceforth M3), found in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*,[166] volume 6. This text bears no colophon.

Another text containing the word marvelous in the title is *The Marvelous Primordial State Tantra (Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i rgyud)* in eleven chapters, found in the Tsamtrag edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*,[167] volume 3. This work, which is in verse, bears no colophon and with the exception of a few lines appears to be an entirely different text from those mentioned above. Moreover, its style and content seem to be of a later date than M1 and M2, and it is considerably easier to understand.

Although basically the same as M2, M1 has two extra chapters, the language of which differs considerably from that in the other forty chapters. For this reason and, as stated by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his foreword, from the

citations quoted in other works by ancient scholars and accomplished masters, we can conclude that *The Marvelous Primordial State* included in either the *Eighteen Major Crucial Teachings* or in the twenty-one most representative scriptures of the Mind series, is indeed M2, *The Marvelous Primordial State* in forty chapters. On comparing the M3 text with M1 and M2, M3, *The Marvelous Total Existence* with its twenty chapters can probably be considered an incomplete form of *The Marvelous Primordial State.*

Following is a brief examination of the relationship between M1, M2, and M3. According to the M2 colophon, three different translations of this text existed from early times: one by Shri Simha and Vairocana, one by Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara, and one by Jnanagarbha and Yudra Nyingpo. We may assume that the oldest is the one translated by Shri Simha and Vairocana, the second oldest by Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara, and the latest by Jnanagarbha and Yudra Nyingpo. To our knowledge, the Jnanagarbha and Yudra Nyingpo translation is no longer available, unless it is none other than the presumably incomplete twenty-chapter M3 that bears no colophon. M1 and M2 are for the most part identical, showing only negligible differences in the grammar, a few additional or missing lines, a different word here and there, and a slightly different distribution of content among the chapters.

It is interesting to note that *The Marvelous Primordial State* contained in the *Collected Tantras of Vairocana*[168] (bearing no colophon), which we would expect to be identical to the one translated by Shri Simha and Vairocana found in the Tsamtrag *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, has only forty chapters (instead of M1's forty-two) and appears to be the same as M2.

As mentioned above, M1's chapter 39, "The Secret Instruction on the Primordial State," and chapter 40, "Secret Instruction Taught by the King of the Crucial Teachings," are radically different in language from the previous chapters. In these two chapters we find such terms as already completed, great sphere, presence, undistracted, settling in the natural state, antidote, and ten bodhisattvas, terms that were not used in the previous chapters and that do not seem to reflect the original language of this scripture.

Moreover, the first line of M1's chapter 40 contains the heading: "The Reasons for Teaching Qualified Disciples," but proceeds to present content inconsistent with this heading; chapter 40 of M2, which bears the same heading, does have content concordant with its chapter title while the textual body corresponds to M1's chapter 42. Because there is reasonable doubt as to whether these two chapters belong to the original text of *The Marvelous Primordial State*

or whether they were added to the text sometime later, our translation presents them separately, below.

Other Differences Between M1 and M2

To be noted are the following differences between M1 and M2: In M2, chapters 23 and 25 of M1 are merged into a single chapter (23), although interestingly this is not the case in *The Marvelous Primordial State* found in the *Collected Tantras of Vairocana*, whose chapter order is the same as that of M2.

Half of M1's chapter 24 is contained in M2's chapter 25; the other half is contained in M2's chapter 24. From chapter 26 on, the chapters in M1 and M2 again correspond, up to and including chapter 38. Then, chapters 41 and 42 of M1 correspond respectively to M2's chapters 39 and 40.

Assuming that the Shri Simha and Vairocana translation is the oldest as hypothesized above, the second translation by Vimalamitra and Nyag Jnanakumara may have improved the text by rearranging the sentence order in a few chapters (as in chapter 8 for example) and redistributing some sentences to other chapters, thus determining a different chapter order. This may also be true of the third translation, that of Jnanagarbha and Yudra Nyingpo, which may possibly be M3, although this cannot be verified. Yet such assumed chronological order seems to be contradicted by the fact that at times the order of some sentences in M3 is the same as that in M1 but not the same as that in M2. Moreover, it must be noted that those sections of the three texts that are in verse are virtually identical to one another.

However, if we disregard the variations just mentioned, since M1 and M2 match exactly in textual correspondence, it remains to be seen if the two versions are actually the products of two different translation teams as stated in their colophons, or are one translation that was slightly altered in the course of time through editorial and printing interventions. Usually, tantras translated from Sanskrit by two different translators show notable divergence in sentence structure, order, and so on, reflecting discrepancies in understanding and presentation style; this does not appear to be the case for these two versions of our text.

The Peculiarities of M3

M3 is indeed slightly different from M1and M2 in several respects. First of all, it

does not open with its title, but with an homage to Samantabhadra. In fact, most of M3's chapters start abruptly with the Teacher speaking or the interlocutor asking a question, and do not provide the chapter title at the outset as do the other versions, but rather at the chapter's end.

M3 lacks the first chapter, *The Setting of the Teaching,* found in M1 and M2, and is composed of only twenty chapters. Its first chapter thus corresponds to the second chapter, and so on, of the other versions, until chapter 10, whose first half is found in chapter 11 of M2 and whose second half is found in chapter 12 of both M1 and M2. Chapter 11 corresponds to chapter 13 of M1 and M2, although it lacks thirty-one lines that are present in the other two versions. Chapter 12 corresponds to chapter 14 of M1 and M2; chapter 13, to chapter 15; and chapter 14, to chapter 16 of M1 and M2. The first half of chapter 15 corresponds to chapter 17 of M1 and M2, and the second half to chapter 18 of M1 and M2. Chapter 16 corresponds to chapter 19 of M1 and M2; chapter 17, to chapter 20; chapter 18, to chapter 21; and chapter 19, to chapter 22 of M1 and M2. Chapter 20 corresponds to chapter 25 of M1 and M2, and the content of M1 and M2's chapters 23 and 24 is not to be found in this text.

M3's fifth chapter is longer as it contains some fifty-seven lines that are not found in M1 or M2. These lines, which are of great interest, seem to have been translated from an original Sanskrit text other than those used by the translators of M1 and M2, and are placed separately below. The fact that some of the language employed in these fifty-seven lines is more modern, explicative, and less cryptic may indicate that this version is indeed the latest of the three translations. In general, the language employed in M3 seems to be the result of further editorial work intended to polish, simplify, and clarify enigmatic parts of the text.

Appendix Two

CHAPTERS 39 and 40 of the Shri Simha and Vairocana Translation

Chapters 39 and 40 of the Shri Simha and Vairocana translation of *The Marvelous Primordial State* contained in the Tsamtrag edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition* are called, respectively, “The Secret Instruction on the Primordial State,” and “The Secret Instruction Taught by the King of the Crucial Teachings.” The first explains the semantics of the words *bodhicitta mahasukha*. The second explains the primordial state as the essence of cyclic existence and of its transcendence and the variety of phenomena and their emptiness, as well as the resultant Body, Voice, and Mind. Because these two chapters employ a slightly different and apparently more modern language than the earlier chapters, we have not included them in the main text.

CHAPTER 39: The Secret Instruction on the Primordial State

This chapter explains the secret instruction on the primordial state.

Pure means that all actions are utterly pure, since they are already completed. Total means that all aims are the same in the expanse [of the true nature of reality] because, without the need for searching, they do not concretely exist in that dimension.

The total sphere pervades everything and, being one, it manifests in the state of Samantabhadra, the mind essence.

Since it is indivisible, it is bliss.

Since it is beyond all causes and conditions and does not depend on anything, it is total.

Since it has no concept of effort related to coarse vision and does not enter into action, it is pure.

Since it is beyond all thoughts of abiding immovable in the nonconceptual state, it is perfect.

Since it is never distracted from the unborn contemplation, it is mind.

Since presence is relaxed in its authentic condition and there is no need for

any antidote, it is bliss.

Since it does not depend on any initiation or *siddhis* and does not need to be accomplished by [treading] a path, it is the self-perfected state: thus, it is total.

[So ends] the thirty-ninth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which teaches the secret instruction on the primordial state.

CHAPTER 40: The Secret Instruction Taught by the King of the Crucial Teachings

This chapter explains the reason for teaching qualified students who are worthy receptacles.

The primordial state is Samantabhadra.
It is also Vajrasattva and the other buddhas of the five families.
It is the consort of the five buddhas.
It is the male and female bodhisattvas.
It is Body, Voice, and Mind.
It is the five great causal elements.
It is the cause.
It is the result.
It is the *vajra*.
It is wisdom.
It is the true nature of reality.
It is the expanse of the true nature of reality.
It is the totally blissful *dharmakaya*.
It is phenomena.
It is samsara.
It is nirvana.
It is nonduality.
It is cause and effect.
It is Vairocana.
It is the authentic wisdom.
It is the ten [bodhi]sattvas.

Therefore, the variety is Samantabhadra Vajrasattva.
This itself is the unborn space of the consorts of the buddhas.

The indivisibility of the male and female buddhas is Body, Voice, and Mind.

[So ends] the fortieth chapter of *The Marvelous Primordial State*, which teaches the Secret Instruction taught by the King of the Crucial Teachings.

Appendix Three
The Additional Fifty-Seven Lines of M3, Chapter 5

The following section is included only in *The Marvelous Total Existence*, chapter 5, identified above as M3, and found in the *Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition*, volume 6.

Attachment, anger, ignorance, pride, and jealousy exist from the very beginning and will remain until the end, and thus they are primordially pure: attachment is myself, anger is myself, ignorance is myself, pride is myself, and jealousy is myself.

At that time [of recognition], since the past and the present are inseparable, the innate phenomenon of attachment is naturally pure; therefore, anger, and so forth, are [also] pure.

Since there is no concept of attachment, not even the term anger, and so forth, exist; they are phenomena that arise from mind essence. Pure by their very nature, they cannot be differentiated. Firm and unchanging, they cannot be named and cannot be severed. They are in indissoluble union; they are transformations of the indestructible [*vajra*] nature.

From the absolute sameness of phenomena that is indivisible, infinite mandalas of phenomena arise from the essence of one's own mind, and male and female buddhas of [all] the families and of the five families [in particular], together with the bodhisattvas as the perfect retinue, arise and are perceived. The power of the interdependence of causes and conditions is the primordial state that manifests all.

[Ordinary] body, voice, and mind are inseparable and have the nature of sameness.

Through the power of the essence that is devoid of intention, all the mandalas of Body, Voice, and Mind have always arisen and are still arising in their entirety from one's self. [All the manifestations of] light, of clairvoyance, [of the miraculous powers of] moving unobstructed through rocks, on water, and in the sky; of the various emanations, of different sounds and voices; and of all the existent and nonexistent phenomena found in the infinite, limitless universe of the three thousand world systems arise from the power of my Body, Voice, and

Mind.

Therefore, through the discerning wisdom [one realizes that] all phenomena of cyclic existence as long as beings exist; [all] the perfect Enlightened Ones; everything that abides in the past, present, and future; the three existences; the three realms; the three Supreme [Jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha]; all who abide in the mother's womb and [all] who have left [the womb]; the male, female, and neuter genders; animals, anguished spirits, hell beings, devas, [and] human beings; the old, the young, and so forth, are just me. Therefore, they are [the essence of] my Mind.

The wish-fulfilling precious jewel, the wish-fulfilling tree, all the enjoyments of the gods, the oceans, Mount Meru, the continents, and so forth, are my primordial state.

Wherever I abide, I am the perfect and fully enlightened Buddha. Even when the bad times that are my transformation [come], I am the Buddha.

Whatever birth I take, I am the perfect and fully enlightened Buddha. I am the energy manifestation, the total bliss, of the primordial state itself.

All beings and all world systems of the universe of three thousand world systems are the primordial enlightenment; they are my primordial state. Not even one thing exists that [my primordial state] cannot transform into or become.

Notes

NOTE TO THE FOREWORD

1 The title, appearing in the Tibetan text as *Bodhicitta Sopashika* and interpreted in the introduction, is likely a deformation of the Sanskrit *Bodhicitta Saubhashika*.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1 Although the root scriptures of Dzogchen are called tantras, they do not set forth the tantric principles and praxis. In fact, the root scriptures of Dzogchen do not present the ten topics (Tib. *dngos po bcu*) expounded in the classical tantras. See p. 11 of this introduction.

2 The *Tantra of the All-Surpassing Sound* mentions thirteen dimensions (*thal ba*) located beyond the boundaries of our world system, in some of which the Dzogchen tantras were taught.

3 Tib. *sum cu rtsa gsum*; Skt. *trayastrimsha*: the heaven above Mount Meru. At its center is the court of Indra, chief of the thirty-three gods. See Kongtrul Lodrö Taye's *Myriad Worlds.*

4 Tib. *Phyag na rdo rje*: the deity who represents the power of all enlightened beings, often identified as the compiler and guardian of the tantras.

5 Although the exact location of Oddiyana is unknown, some modern scholars believe it was centered around the present-day Swat Valley in northern Pakistan. In any case, from what we read in histories and biographies, Oddiyana has undoubtedly been seen as a very special place where the tantras and Dzogchen were practiced and the teachings preserved. It is from this mystical land that many *siddhas* brought to central India the many tantras, explanations, and secret instructions that later spread to all regions of India and beyond, into the Land of Snows.

6 One of the most important earlier translated scriptures of the Mind series of Dzogchen. See bibliography.

7 This description of Garab Dorje's appearance is found in Kongtrul Lodrö

Taye's *Treasury of Knowledge, Books Two, Three, and Four: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet*, pp. 189-90; 194.

8 Some, however, place Garab Dorje's birth in the 166th year after the Buddha's passing, that is, in 716 BCE. See Dudjom Rinpoche's *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism.*

9 Tib. *rnal 'byor spyod pa*: one of the four main trends of Buddhist philosophy, more commonly known as Cittamatra or Mind Only.

10 See bibliography.

11 See Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism.*

12 A story of the life of Buddhajnanapada can be found in Taranatha's *bKa' babs bdun ldan*. See bibliography.

13 See *The Blue Annals*, p. 369 onward.

14 Popularly known in Tibet as the Precious Guru, Padmasambhava was the principal protagonist of the first diffusion of tantric Buddhism in Tibet during the reign of King Trisong Detsen (742-797).The first Tibetan Buddhist school, known as Nyingma, developed from his spiritual activities.

15 Probably of Burmese origin, Shri Simha received in a vision Avolokiteshvara's injunction to go to the Sosadvipa charnel ground in India. During the thirty years that passed before he followed the deity's injunction, Shri Simha spent his time learning the tantras on Wu T'ai Chan mountain in China. At last, he proceded to India, where met Manjushrimitra with whom he spent some twenty-five years. He is counted as one of the masters of Jnanasutra, Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and Vairocana and is known for having arranged the Secret Instruction series of Dzogchen into four cycles: outer, inner, secret, most secret, and unsurpassed.

16 Vimalamitra was a disciple of Shri Simha. He is particularly known for the transmission in Tibet of many spiritual teachings later codified as the Heart Essence of Vimalamitra (Tib. *Bi ma snying thig*) belonging to the Secret Instruction series of the Dzogchen teaching.

17 Tib. *Bai (*or *Be) ro tsa na*. Considered an emanation of Buddha Vairocana, as a young child he was given to Padmasambhava under whose guidance he practiced the discipline of Tantra. Having become a great translator and recoverer of many Dzogchen teachings from India, Vairocana became one of the main protagonists of the spread of the Dzogchen teaching in Tibet.

18 The tantric section of the Tibetan Buddhist canon attributes thirty-four works to Manjushrimitra. Most of these are concerned with the

Manjushrinamasamgiti, but also among them is the famous *Meditation on the Primordial State*, better known as *Extracting Pure Gold from Ore*, one of the twenty-one major scriptures of the Mind series of Dzogchen.

19 Tib. *'pho ba chen po* or *'ja' lus 'pho ba chen po*: great transference into the rainbow body. This denotes the realization in which physical beings transform their living body into an immortal body of light that can appear wherever and whenever needed in order to spiritually uplift beings.

20 By Yudra Nyingpo. See bibliography.

21 See Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente, *The Supreme Source*.

22 A female being belonging to the yaksha class.

23 Most of the information provided here on the lineage of the Mind series has been summarized from *The Supreme Source*.

24 See Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, *Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, p. 340.

25 Dharmashri's commentary on Ngari Panchen's *The Three Vows*. See bibliography.

26 Tib. *sgron ma bzhi*: four lamps or lights related to the inner channels of one's body on the basis of which one trains in the advanced Dzogchen practices of crossing over (*thod rgal).* These include the lamp of the empty sphere (*thig le stong pa'i sgron ma*), the lamp of the expanse of pure awareness (*rig pa dbyings kyi sgron ma*), the lamp of self-originated knowledge (*shes rab rang byung gi sgron ma*), and the far-sighted water lamp (*rgyang zhag chu'i sgron ma*).

27 Tib. *mthong lam*: the third of five paths of the spiritual journey in the Mahayana tradition.

28 The Sutra tradition embodied in the Mahayana has two systems tailored to disciples possessing either dull or sharp mental faculties, known as the system of gradual entrance and of direct entrance. The first represents the Nalanda tradition propogated in Tibet by Kamalashila. The second, stemming from the Buddha's disciple Kashyapa, was propogated by Bodhi Dharmottara (Bodhidharma) in China and from there exported to Tibet. In Tibet the two systems are known as Tsenmen and Tönmun, repectively, from the ancient Chinese terms *ch'ien men* and *thun men.* As opposed to the gradual approach just mentioned in the text, the followers of Tönmun assert that it is possible to train directly in the unborn absolute from the very beginning. These two approaches are described in detail in Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's *Light for the Eyes of Contemplation.*See bibliography.

29 Tib. *sa bcu*. See below, n. 100.

30 Tib. *srog rtsol; Skt. pranayama*: entails blocking the flow of karmic energies in the lateral channels of the body and directing them into the central channel. Inner heat (Tib. *gtum mo*; Skt. *candali*) is a yogic practice employing visualization, breath control, and so on, to reunite the white and the red vital essences of the body to induce the experience of bliss. As it involves the energy focal points of the body, this practice is known as the method of one's own body (*rang lus thabs*). Sexual practices require a qualified partner who has trained in yogic exercises of controlling the vital essence and the vital energy. This practice directly induces the experience of bliss. As it is applied with a partner, it is known as the method with the body of another (*gzhan lus thabs*). For a detailed discussion, see Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, *The Elements of Tantric Practice.*

31 Tib. *dga' ba bzhi*. The four joys are the experiences of intense pleasure that occur as the white seminal essence descends from the crown of the head and reaches the forehead, throat, heart, and navel. At this last place, the joy is known as innate joy (Tib. *lhan skyes dga' ba;* Skt. *sahajananda*), for it is the innate bliss of the mind essence that becomes manifest in the yogin's awareness.

32 Tib. *bskyed rim*: the gradual imaginative process of recreating the environment as the mandala and oneself as the deity, performed in the highest tantras in order to counteract grasping to ordinary vision as real.

33 Tib. *phyag rgya chen po*; Skt. *mahamudra*: the Great Symbol, understood here as the final attainment of the tantric praxis.

34 Tib. *rdzogs rim*: the reality distinguished by the characteristics of innateness, nonconceptuality, and totality that are present as the condition of the base, path, and result. As this reality exists within the ordinary body, it can be made manifest by working with the body's subtle aspect, namely, the channels, energy winds, and vital essences. Phase of completion also refers to the methods for achieving such realization.

35 For a detailed discussion, see Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, *Buddhist Ethics.*

36 The chief student of Nyangchen Sherab Chog, at whose feet he became an accomplished scholar and expert practitioner in the sutras and tantras, particularly in the phases of creation and completion. Yeshe Jungne greatly developed the transmission received from his master, which became known as the tradition of Nyang.

37 Aro Yeshe Jungne of Longtang in eastern Tibet became an important link in the transmission of Dzogchen in the lineage of Vairocana, a transmisson that eventually reached Dampa Desheg of Kathog (1122-1192).

38 The instructions for these diverse practice traditions are found in the anthology *sNga 'gyur bka' ma*, vol. Tsa, and in the *gDams ngag mdzod,* vol. one, by Kongtrul Lodrö Taye.

39 A contemporary of King Trisong Detsen, he was one of the nine "heart" students of Padmasambhava and a direct disciple of Vimalamitra, Vairocana, and Yudra Nyingpo. He was responsible for numerous early translations of the sutras, tantras, and Dzogchen scriptures, and was highly important in the transmissions of the Nyingma school.

40 The principal student of Vairocana and one of the twenty-five main disciples of Guru Padmasambhava, as well as a major disciple of Vimalamitra and of Vairocana while the latter was exiled at Tsawa Rong. Translator of many texts, he served as one of the lineage masters of the Mind series and of the Vast Space series of Dzogchen.

41 Tib. *tsha ba rong*: a district between eastern Tibet and China.

42 See *Chos dbyings rin po che'i mdzod kyi 'grel pa lung gi gter mdzod*, by Longchenpa (1308-1863).

43 Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa (1504-1566): an eminent scholar and accomplished master of the Kagyü school. See bibliography.

44 Nyangral Nyima Ozer (1124-1192): a major treasure discoverer and one of the "five kings,"who also include Guru Chöwang, Dorje Lingpa, Pema Lingpa, and Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, all considered to be emanations of King Trisong Detsen.

45 See bibliography.

46 See bibliography.

47 See bibliography.

48 Born into a family of Nyingma tantric practitioners at Gorma near Shalu monastery, Yungtön Dorje Pal (1284-1368) became learned in the doctrines of both the Nyingma and the New schools. Having studied with many masters, he became one of the most renowned Tibetan masters of his day. Famous for his powers, as a youth he was summoned by the Chinese emperor, who was pleased by his display of magical abilities. He learned the *Kalacakra* from Büton and became proficient in all the series of Dzogchen; he was the lineage holder of the *terma* teachings of the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje

(1284-1339) and the teacher of the fourth Karmapa, Rolpe Dorje (1340-1383).

49 See bibliography.

50 See bibliography.

51 Kawa Paltseg was one of the first Tibetans to take Buddhist ordination. He later became a disciple of Padmasambhava who identified him as an incarnation of a great scholar. A famed translator, he was also instrumental in designing forms of Tibetan calligraphy. Chogro Lui Gyaltsen was an early translator of great importance and one of the twenty-five main disciples of Padmasambhava. He assisted Padmasambhava in the transcription and concealment of *terma* treasures. The great *tertön* Karma Lingpa (fourteenth century) is considered to be an incarnation of Chogro Lui Gyaltsen.

52 A translator of Sanskrit Buddhist texts and protagonist of the second propagation of Buddhism in Tibet. A student of the renowned Indian saint Atisha, he is said to have constructed more than one hundred monasteries in western Tibet, as well as the famous Tabo monastery in Spiti in Himachal Pradesh, India, and Poo in Kinnaur, India.

53 This refers either to Shong Lotsava Lodrö Tenpa, who lived during the thirteenth century, or to Pong Lotsava Lodrö Tenpa (1276-1342).

54 Lalitavajra was a famous early Buddhist *siddha* of India. Along with Naropa, he is said to have been a principal disciple of Tilopa. He is linked with the transmission of the explanations of the tantras that he himself brought back from Oddiyana.

55 Taranatha Kunga Nyingpo was an eminent master of the Jonang tradition. His main teacher was the Indian Buddhaguptanatha. Taranatha holds a special position in Tibetan Buddhism as one of the few Tibetan historians with a critical sense, and also as the master who became the link for the transmission of countless teachings of his own school, of other schools (including the Shangpa Kagyü), as well as of teachings brought by Marpa (1012-1097) from India to Tibet.

56 These are the authors of three important tantric works known as the “trilogy of commentaries by the bodhisattvas”: Vajrapani’s *Eulogy-Commentary on the Cakrasamvara Tantra*; Pundarika’s commentary *The Stainless Light*, on the *Kalacakra Condensed Tantra*; and Vajragarbha’s *Commentary That Epitomizes the Hevajra Tantra.* See bibliography.

57 It is not a certainty that the Manjushrikirti mentioned here is the same person as Manjushrikirti, the eighth king of Shambhala, who was considered to be an

incarnation of Manjushri.

58 *’Phags pa ’jam dpal kyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa’i rgya cher bshad pa*, by Manjushrikirti; *mTshan yang dag par bjod pa’i ’grel pa*, by Manjushrimitra. See bibliography.

59 Buddhaguhya was most probably the Indian master who was an expert in the Yogatantra praxis and author of a commentary on the *Mahavairocana-abhisambodhi* tantra that is preserved in the Tibetan language. Drogmi Palgyi Yeshe was one of the nine “heart students” of Guru Padmasambhava.

60 See *The Blue Annals*, p. 359.

61 A translator during the earlier propagation of Buddhism in Tibet.

62 A noted disciple of shantipa in the lineage of transmission of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* of the Jnanapada tradition (see *The Blue Annals*, p. 373). Although rarely mentioned in the histories of the propagation of Buddhism in India and Tibet, usually as translator, his name is associated with nearly sixty works found in the Tibetan language Buddhist canon. One must therefore conclude that this outstanding scholar and accomplished master from Kashmir made a substantial contribution to the second propagation of the Buddhist teaching in Tibet. He was invited to Tibet by King Yeshe Ö of Guge in western Tibet to restore the purity of Buddhist teaching and practice that the king considered to have degenerated in various ways. Büton remarks that shraddhakaravarman was particularly knowledgeable in Yogatantra, many scriptures of which he translated into Tibetan. He also appears in the lineage of such tantras as the *Guhyasamaja* and the cycle of teachings on Tara. He became the master and close associate of the great translator Rinchen Zangpo, with whom he collaborated on several important translations.

63 Tib. *bcom ldan ’das*; Skt. *bhagavan*.

64 Refer to key terms for Tibetan equivalents of the other epithets.

65 See Kongtrul’s *Myriad Worlds.*

66 See Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente, *The Supreme Source*, pp. 21-22.

67 Tib. *tshogs lam*: the first of the five paths taught in the Mahayana. The other four are the path of preparation (*sbyor lam*), the path of seeing (*mthong lam*), the path of meditation (*sgom lam*), and the path of no more learning (*mi slob lam*).

68 See Vimalamitra’s commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, ff. 1a-38b.

69 See p. 34 and Toh. 2093, vol. Tshi, f. 57a4.

70 See Garab Dorje's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, f. 56a4.

71 Tib. *kun tu bzang po*; Skt. *samantabhadra*.

72 In some tantric practices, such as the Guhyasamaja, the yogin in union with a real or visualized consort has a drop of semen emerge from the tip of the sexual organ and imagines himself offering it to the deities.

73 See Garab Dorje's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, f. 42b2-4.

74 See the explanation of similar lines of the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* in Garab Dorje's commentary, ff. 42b6-43a4, and in Vimalamitra's commentary to the same tantra, ff. 10b2-11a3.

75 See Garab Dorje's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, f. 57b6.

76 See the explanation of similar lines of the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* in Garab Dorje's commentary, ff. 42b6-43a4, and in Vimalamitra's commentary to the same tantra, ff. 10b2-11a3.

77 See Garab Dorje's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, f. 57b6.

NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION

1 According to the hierarchy described in Indian and Tibetan cosmology, the *mamos*, *devas*, and so on represent the whole spectrum of subtle beings, starting with the *devas* and *asuras*, who dwell in the two highest realms of cyclic existence. *Mamos* are various kinds of subtle female beings; *vayudevas*, beings in the retinue of the eponymous god of the wind; *yamas*, minions of the lord of death Yama; *nagas*, serpentine demi-gods; *kumbhandas*, sea-dwellers with human bodies and animal heads; *yakshas*, a large class of beings originally dwelling in trees and so forth; *rakshasas*, powerful and pernicious demons; and *bhutas*, roaming spirits of deceased persons who did not find their way into a new body. These beings are included in some enumerations of the eight classes of gods and demons (Tib. *lha srin sde brgyad*).

2 Here these beings represent those who are hostile to this teaching and are therefore unfit to hear it.

3 Tib.*'jig rten mgon po*; Skt. *lokanatha*: an epithet of the Buddha.

4 Tib. *thugs*: Mind is used in the sense of primordial state of mind. It has been capitalized in order to distinguish it from ordinary mind (*yid*).

5 At times identified as the highest realm in cyclic existence and at others as a pure land beyond the cycle of existence. Here it is a name for the dimension

of enlightenment manifest in and of itself, the essential reality that is not located in any of the ten directions and that has no size, no boundary, and no orientation.

6 Tib. *bde bar gshegs pa*: literally, gone to bliss, an epithet of the buddhas.

7 The literal meaning of the Tibetan expression *stong gsum gyi stong chen po'jig rten gyi khams*, here translated as the universe of a billion world systems, is literally, great thousand third-order thousand world system. According to ancient Indo-Tibetan cosmology, a world system is centered around Mount Meru with its four main continents. If we multiply this by a thousand times a thousand times a thousand, adding up to one billion, we have the great thousand third-order thousand world system. See Kongtrul's *Myriad Worlds.*

8 Tib. *sngags*. In Tantrism, Mantra denotes the immutable reality that is the union of emptiness and compassion. Mantra is so called because it protects (*tra*) the mind (*man*) from conceptual elaborations.

9 A yogin of the three times (Tib. *dus gsum rnal 'byor*) generally refers to one who has knowledge of the past, present, and future, but it can also be interpreted as a realized yogin who has knowledge of the fourth time, the condition beyond time that is the real nature of past, present, and future (Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, oral communication; henceforth: CNN, OC).

10 Vajrasana refers to the village of Bodh Gaya in the present-day state of Bihar, India, the place where Buddha Shakyamuni and the other buddhas of our era manifested the attainment of enlightenment.

11 When discussing the path of Ati, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains the meaning of this phrase in relation to the principle of nonaction through which the primordial state is recognized:

> Let's take an example. When the sea is dirty and agitated, the dirt comes to the surface; but if it is not dirty, having become clear in a natural way, without being sought, all reflections appear. Thus, [enlightenment] will never be met by seeking it through the inferior [vehicles], because [seeking] is not in accordance with the unperturbed essence. In accordance with this great system, [enlightenment] occurs as a result of nonaction. Since the primordial Buddha appears without having sought [enlightenment], [all beings]—from the completely purified Victorious Ones to the denizens of the Avici [hell]—attain perfection due to the principle of [nonaction]. Thus, all the Victorious Ones have become enlightened by understanding this principle. [Thus,] the *Mejung* states: *Also, I, Vajrasattva, manifested my enlightenment anew at Vajrasana upon understanding the principle of the marvelous primordial state*. See *Light for the Eyes of Contemplation* (*bsam gtan mig sgron*), ff.156b6-157a4 (henceforth

referred to as LEC).

This line is also quoted in the section on the view beyond objectives of *Phan grub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma* (*The Heart Sun: Mind Essence of All Scholars and Siddhas*), a text attributed to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu extracted and edited a section of this text that he entitled *Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i nyams khrid* (*Experiential Instructions on the Marvelous Primordial State*, henceforth referred to as EIM). *The Heart Sun* is found in the first volume of the *Bai ro rgyud 'bum* or *Collection of Tantras of Vairocana*. In the section on the view beyond objectives (*gza' gtad med pa'i lta ba*) on p. 2, this text states: *Also, I, Vajrasattva, who dwell on the level of the wheel of letters, by understanding the principle of the marvelous primordial state, eventually, without treading [a path], attained the unique unsurpassable wisdom in the state of the total self beyond [both] cyclic existence and the transcendence of suffering, the dimension essence of enlightenment that is beyond suffering.*

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, in his oral commentary on EIM provided during a retreat at Merigar (Italy) in August 2009, states: "The discovery of one's real nature occurs through experiences. Thus, experiences are the method for such discovery. Such discovery is the actual enlightenment. For this reason, in the *Mejung* it is said: *Also, I, Vajrasattva, manifested my enlightenment anew at Vajrasana upon understanding the principle of the marvelous primordial state*"(CNN, OC).

122 Quoting this sentence while discussing the unmistaken manner of settling the mind in meditation, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains:

> [In] the meditation of Atiyoga it is indeed sufficient—without making concepts and the true nature of reality [into] something to reject or accept—not to think about anything and not to stop anything. Without considering walking, standing, sleeping, sitting, the experience of pleasure or even [of] suffering [as] a fault, there is no interruption of the field of experience of concepts. Without considering anything as a [postive] quality, one does not meditate on the true nature of reality through examination. All that appears as self and other is primordially one without having to be unified; thus, one does not focus, does not look from one's seat on a true nature of reality out there. In any kind of behavior, one remains at ease or asleep without thoughts. One enjoys things without thinking, "Don't think." Without thinking [while] moving, sleeping, standing, [while] happy, or even [while] suffering, thoughts will naturally subside. There, without abandoning subject and object since these do not move, there is no deviation into worldliness. Since mind and the object are not separate, there is no deviation into unceasing vision. Since there is no abandonment of anything,

there is no deviation into [becoming] a *shravaka* or *pratyeka*. Since [in Atiyoga] there is no view or meditation based on one of those textual traditions with limited views, there is no deviation [toward] any vehicle, for we are in the nonconceptual nature; thus, there is no action.

Without abandoning anything, all is luminous in one's own state; there is nothing to look at externally and nothing to look at by withdrawing [the consciousness] inward. All these [phenomena] are one's own pure awareness; however, do not think, "They are so." [Yet,] in that perfectly complete state unmixed with nonthinking, nonfocusing, nonconceptualizing without thinking, without focusing, do not enter into the idea of focusing on that: this is the supreme meditation of the Omniscient One. That is, [although] sleep, lethargy, fogginess, and agitation are not left loose, neither are they considered faults: one remains naturally, without practicing any austerity. This is equal to the state of realization of Samantabhadra itself. (EIM, pp. 8-9)

Explaining this same sentence from the *Mejung*, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu says: "*Omniscient* refers to the one who abides in his or her real nature. At that time, although all one's vision is ordinary and dualistic, one is not conditioned by that vision. Thus, to remain in one's real nature does not imply that one's vision disappears. Vision remains, but is experienced as omniscient wisdom. This is the supreme meditation. And in regard to that meditation, there is nothing that we can conceptualize" (CNN, OC).

13 According to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, the preceding two lines point to the way in which the mind, according to a mode [of the teaching], remains centered in the space of the correct principle of meditation. He comments:

If we keep to this citation, the supreme meditation is that which is naturally clear and without movement, beyond [the duality] of I and other, in the infinite expanse of the self-originated wisdom. What is its characteristic? In the state of the great wisdom, all is included in one's self; thus, the pure awareness is not conceived to be on one's side, the objects do not appear outside, and there are no fixed concepts. From that [meditative state], naturally, the emotions do not arise. This principle is the orally transmitted revelation of the state of realization of the Victorious Ones. (LEC, f. 211a4-6)

Moreover, citing these two lines to substantiate its treatment of the unmistaken manner of settling the mind in meditation in the context of contemplation without any reference point, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says:

If one should ask what is the unmistaken way of settling the mind in meditation, it is as follows: the great being who unerringly understands the essential point of the principle of the marvelous primordial state meditates without approaching the true nature of reality with mental [concepts] and, indeed, has no point of reference [for the meditation]. However, [as] a mere biased indication of the

> manner of meditating on the unmistaken real principle [for those who are unfamiliar with it], that which cannot be meditated upon is called meditation, and not settling the mind anywhere, since there is no place to settle the mind other then the true nature of reality, is called settling [the mind]. Therefore the nonabiding anywhere of the meditator's mind is called abiding. (EIM, p.6)

Regarding this, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu says: "The one who is in my dimension, that is, in the dimension of the primordial state, has no concept of being realized or even of being in a state of contemplation, for these are concepts, and the primordial state is beyond concepts" (CNN, OC).

14 Mirror-like wisdom (Tib. *me long lta bu'i ye shes*) together with the wisdom of sameness (*mnyam nyid ye shes*), discerning wisdom (*so sor rtogs pa'i ye shes*), action-accomplishing wisdom *(bya ba grub pa'i ye shes*), and the wisdom of the expanse of the nature of reality (*chos dbyings kyi ye shes*) constitute the five wisdoms, the true nature of the five emotions. In his *Sems nyid ngal so'i 'grel pa shing rta chen po,* Longchenpa defines them as follows:

> The wisdom of the real dimension of existence—Vairocana—is immutable, beyond the dualism of subject and object; being the total pacification of illusion, like the sky, it is free of all mental construction. Mirror-like wisdom —Akshobhya—is the base from which clarity and emptiness manifest; it is the great source of all wisdom. Being the total pacification of the consciousness that is the base of all from which the other consciousnesses develop, it serves as the base of the other three wisdoms; like the surface of a limpid mirror, it is free of the stains of dualism. The wisdom of sameness—Ratnasambhava—represents the total perfection in the sameness of every thing and in the sameness of [cyclic] existence and liberation; being the total pacification of pride, it is knowledge of the sameness of self and others and of the indivisibility of existence and liberation. Discerning wisdom—Amitabha—is the knowledge of all things distinctly in their diverse manifestations and in their ultimate nature; being the total pacification of craving, it is knowledge of the essential empty nature of things and of the relation between cause and effect, the nature of the multifarious relative manifestations. Action-accomplishing wisdom—principally Amoghasiddhi—is marvelous enlightened activity, never hindered in its aspects; being the total pacification of jealousy, it spontaneously and unimpededly achieves the aims of others by means of body, voice, and mind. (ff. 170-172)

15 Explaining the preceding lines starting from *The total state of the mind,* Chögyal Namkhai Norbu says: "*The total state of the mind of all sentient beings* refers to the primordial state of all sentient beings. *Naturally pure, and thus stainless* means that its condition is naturally pure from the very beginning and is thus without impurities. *Everything is unborn and*

uncontaminated means that the primordial state is always beyond our concepts. *There is no enlightenment and no actual realization* means that there is not even the notion of realization and of spiritual development that effect attainments, and so forth. *There is also no nature [of elements] and no elements* means that there is not even the notion of condition of the energy of the elements and of elements—earth, water, fire, wind, and space—and so forth, because all these are just concepts. *Without characteristics and immutable like space* means that just like space, the primordial state is devoid of any concepts. *Neither dual* means that it is the nonduality of everything" (CNN, OC). For additional explanation of these two lines, see below, n. 46.

The lines starting from *The total state of the mind* until *and thus stainless* also appear in the fourth chapter of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* (f. 92b2). Commenting on them, Gyalwe Chin states: "*The total state of the mind of all sentient beings* refers to the wisdom that is free of all fabrications. *Pure* means it is devoid of pollution [caused] by the stains of the habitual tendencies of emotions. Therefore, its nature is *stainless* means that it is a naturally and completely pure Mind" (Toh. 1847, vol. Nyi, ff. 178b7-179a2).

16 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe cites the previous two paragraphs in relation to the view beyond objectives: "Those who are blind, who act in order to manifest [the objective] and seek the goal, do not understand that the true principle and the goal are one's self. [Thus] they lose hope, like deer chasing a mirage [of water]." (LEC, f. 159a4-5) After quoting the two paragraphs, he states: "Hence, the objective is a deception; thus, in this [path] there are no objectives"(LEC, f. 160a2).

17 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains the meaning of the two preceding sentences as follows:

> Since everything is devoid of an [intrinsic] essence, the duality of an object and awareness does not exist, and the unborn state just as it is, the pure awareness of one's self, expands naturally and manifests as clearly as the sun shining in the sky. Since [in this state] there is no sitting, there is no recollection, there is no action to manifest [the objective], there is not even intentional meditation, there is no distraction, and no separation [from meditation], this is called "leaving the mind [in contemplation]"; if one remains in such a state, this is called "to practice the path of the Dharma," "to have to correct view," "to practice the yoga": it is the same field of experience as that of the Victorious One. (LEC, f. 211b2-5)

Moreover, discussing the unmistaken way of settling the mind in meditation, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> If oneself and the true nature of reality were separate, oneself—the meditator—would enter the true nature of reality. But without the need to abandon phenomena or the person, since these are one as the wisdom of nonduality, there is no meditation to be done. [If they were separate] there would be the injunction to act in regard to contemplation, that is, the absurd consequence that contemplation is created by oneself: thus [one] would certainly be bound by [the duality] of subject and object. The wise [person] who has gained confidence in relation to the mind has no contemplation to do: the mind [essence] abides in the light of the Body and manifests in the rays of the Voice. Thus, the mind is like a vajra chisel in the meadow of the sky: all those [who understand this principle] are of the nature of Body, Voice, and Mind naturally manifesting in the wisdom of pure awareness that is the meditator, devoid of going or coming. Therefore, confident in the realization that being without an object of meditation or a meditator, the mind [essence], naturally luminous and unmoving like the sky, does not think about anything; thus, [its] nature is unobstructed and unmoving. The same text [the *Mejung*] states: *Phenomena that are not born have no essence, and thus there is nothing about them on which to meditate. Since they are self-originated like space, all phenomena are proclaimed to be always perfect*. Accordingly, at the time of meditation, there is no prescription as to whether one should keep the sense [organs] open or closed. . . . (EIM, pp. 7-8)

18 Discussing the principle of the total self, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe cites the preceding lines, from *Since I understood* until *charnel ground*, and comments: "The total self (*bdag nyid chen po*) [that includes] all, is the progenitor of all Victorious Ones and is said to be the source of all vehicles. The great being that thus encounters the principle of the state of Buddha while doing nothing in order to understand it, is the embodiment [of all the buddhas], since in the pure awareness that is the originary Buddha, all the Victorious Ones are perfected" (LEC, f. 168b3-4).

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments on these sentences cited by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe also in the context of the nature of the final attainment (EIM, p.14), as follows: "Abiding in the knowledge of the primordial state is the real essence of all enlightened beings. 'I'—meaning Samantabhadra or primordial state—am like a tomb or a great charnel ground, for all beings and all enlightened beings are in this state" (CNN, OC). See also below, n. 114.

19 Vimalamitra explains the three *kayas* or dimensions in a nutshell: "From a common perspective, within the dimension of reality, the sky-like unborn nature, there arises the dimension of perfect resources, the cloud-like Vairocana; and from that, Shakyamuni, the rain-like dimension of emanation that acts to benefit living beings. From a special perspective, pure awareness

that is by nature luminous clarity is the dimension of perfect resources. The appearance of pure awareness as the variety [of phenomena] is the dimension of emanation. Regardless of the manner in which such a variety [of phenomena] may appear, in reality it is not beyond the unborn [nature] that is the dimension of reality." See Vimalamitra's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, ff. 2b6-3a1.

20 Literally, Mind of the Mind (Tib. *thugs kyi thugs*), and likewise for Body (*sku yi sku*) and Voice (*gsung gi gsung*).

21 Quoting the preceding passage while discussing the principle of the total self, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "In fact, [the total self] is the union and the source of all Victorious Ones. The total self is matchless, thus it possesses great pride and lacks opponents. Because it is the embodiment of the qualities, it is great pride and, just as a designation, is also called I. Well then, it has been affirmed that the total self is the source of everything. How is this so? All the appearances [mentally] conceived are adventitious appearances of good and bad thoughts. Since the total self has not been [mentally] conceived by anyone, it does not have a phenomenal existence. It is present because it has arisen before anything else; therefore, although all is born from it, it has no beginning" (LEC, ff. 168b6-169a3).

22 The preceding two sentences are quoted in EIM (p. 4), in the conclusion of the section on the view beyond objectives, to explain the immeasurable benefits of understanding this view. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments: "One who understands the real nature represented by the view and abides in it is of the same state or level as Vajrasattva. When one has that knowledge, that is, when having received the teacher's introduction one discovers one's real nature, one's body, speech, and mind are the same as the Body, Voice, and Mind of Vajrasattava. Knowing this, one remains in one's real nature" (CNN, OC).

Regarding the meaning of the words *does not abide on the level of enlightenment*, while discussing the principle of the total self, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains as follows: "If one knows this principle without having known it [with the mind], since oneself is the total self, one does not [intentionally] settle at the level of a buddha, the goal" (EIM, ff. 169a6-b1).

23 *Before space arose* (Tib. *nam mkha' med pa'i sngon rol na*) means that when one abides in the knowledge of the real condition, prior to the arising of the concept of space, space does not exist as an object. The subsequent sentences

express the same principle.

24 For the meaning of this paragraph according to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, see below, n. 116.

25 For the meaning of this paragraph, see also above, nn. 13, 17.

26 Here, we have understood the five *kayas* or dimensions (Tib. *sku lnga*) as referring to the Body dimensions of the male and female buddhas of the five families.

27 Introducing a series of citations among which figure the two preceding sentences from the *Mejung*, while discussing the base as it is (Tib. *gzhi'i bzhin pa*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "It has been ascertained that even at the verbal level, there is nothing to be done. [But one may object:] 'Then, if it is considered that [reality] cannot be indicated through words, there is no need for explanations.' This is how I reply to such an objection: as it has also been explained above in detail, the principle is like that, but such an explanation is itself an indication that there is no need [to talk about reality]. The [following] textual arguments promote confidence in the appropriateness of such a system, which is without excess or defects" (LEC, f. 193b3-6). After quoting various sources, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe summarizes his point as follows: "Therefore, at the beginning, through the view, it is very important to definitively ascertain that the principle [of Atiyoga] is not something to be ascertained [with mind]" (LEC, ff. 203b6-204a1).

28 Tib. *skye ba rnam pa bzhi:* birth from womb, egg, heat, moisture, and miraculous birth.

29 Here the words of the text appear to relate to the principle of the last of the five greatnesses (Tib. *che ba lnga*). Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains the five greatnesses as follows:

> The knowledge of the total self thus [explained] occurs in a natural way, without modifications; when this occurs, [the knowledge] shines in the state of pure awareness endowed with five greatnesses. All phenomena, the five elements, and everything derived from them without exception, being unified in the essence of the total self, are the greatness of enlightenment in the expanse of the true nature of reality (*chos kyi dbyings su sangs rgyas pa'i che ba*) without any limits or borders.
>
> Therefore, all the limits and obscurations [resulting] from past actions are naturally purified. Thus, because of the natural purification in the expanse of the true nature of reality, that which appears as the five elements can manifest as the great wisdom in one's own pure awareness. This is the greatness of direct enlightenment (*mngon par sangs rgyas pa'i che ba*).

> The greatness of enlightenment in the total self (*bdag nyid chen por sangs rgyas pa'i che ba*) consists of the perfection [of the five elements] in the wisdom, the total self that is one's own pure awareness.
>
> Regarding the greatness of enlightenment that proves that (*de yin pa'i sangs rgyas pa'i che ba*), since the five elements are the unsought spontaneous presence, as [in the case of] the five [buddha] families, the so-called state of buddha, too, is the very nature of these concrete phenomena.
>
> Regarding the greatness of the absolute nonexistence of enlightenment (*thams cad nas thams cad du sangs rgyas pa med pa*), in the nature of the primordial state, the great emptiness of the originary condition, even the term enlightenment dissolves. . . . (LEC, ff. 170b3-171a4)

30 Here the text gives a semantic interpretation of the three parts of the Tibetan term *byang chub sems* (Skt. *bodhicitta,* translated throughout as primordial state): *byang,* meaning pure; *chub,* total; and *sems,* mind. See also introduction, pp. 8-13.

31 This paragraph explains the two parts of *'dod chags*, the Tibetan term for attachment: *'dod*, meaning to desire, and *chags*, to be attached.

32 In this paragraph, anger (Tib. *zhe sdang*) is described as the very nature of the manifestations of phenomena, possibly because it represents energy or movement related to the self-perfected (*lhun grub*) aspect of one's primordial state from which pure and impure vision arises.

33 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this paragraph in his presentation of the view of the great sphere (Tib. *thig le chen po'i lta ba*) (LEC, ff. 188b5-189a1). See below, n. 118.

34 This paragraph is also quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe in his discussion of the view of the great sphere (LEC, ff. 188b6-189a2). See below, n. 118.

35 This entire chapter accords with the principle expressed in the five commitments of Mahayoga: to fulfill the provisional meanings of the five commitments prescribing that which is not to be renounced, and not to renounce emotions just as they are, as [do] the *shravakas* [who regard them as enemies], but to skillfully engage in them. This is because the five poisons serve as the direct path to liberation, and because their nature is primordially that of the five wisdoms. To fulfill the hidden meanings, one does not renounce the five poisons [but cultivates]:

(1) the ignorance that does not differentiate that which is to be practiced from that which is to be renounced and is impartial in its views, since all things are perfect in the state of equality;

(2) the attachment that is the affection arising from nonobjectifying compassion

for all living beings who lack the realization of the view;
(3) the hatred that subdues misconceptions with self-experienced wisdom;
(4) the pride that does not descend from the heights of the view of realizing the sameness [of phenomena];
(5) the jealousy that does not accommodate dualistic views or conduct in the vast expanse of sameness.

See Kongtrul's *Buddhist Ethics*, pp. 282-83.

36 This line also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 7a4). Garab Dorje (Toh. 2093, vol. Tshi, f. 56b7) explains: "*You are the knowledge of perfect enlightenment* refers to the state that cannot be meditated upon."

37 This line appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (vol. Ka, f. 7a4-5) as *nam mkha' lta bur chags pa med*, the last word meaning without attachment. Garab Dorje (f. 57a1-2) explains: "*Without attachment like the sky* means that it is free of both attachment and nonattachment or that, like the sky, it abides from the origin."

38 This line appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (f. 7a5) as: *rnam dag phung po lnga 'chang ba.* Garab Dorje (f. 57a4) explains this sentence as follows: "[This means] that such pure awareness is never separated from the five illusory wisdoms."

39 This line appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* accompanied by another line: *sangs rgyas kun gyi sprul pa'i sku//byed pa dpag med 'gyes pa po* (*rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 21, f. 73b3). Garab Dorje explains the two lines as follows: "[This means that] the rays of light of the six letters [that become the six munis] radiate from between the faces of the male and female Body of perfect resources" (f. 57b4). See also n. 50, below.

40 This line also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (f. 6b2). Garab Dorje states: "[This] refers to the breath (*dbugs*) of the precious Body of reality" (f. 55a1).

41 Explaining the first two words of this line, *unborn reality* (Tib. *skye med chos*), which also appear in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (f. 6b4), Garab Dorje states: "*Unborn reality* refers to the utterly pure reality that is only the lack of birth and cessation" (f. 55a6).

42 This sentence also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (f. 7a1). Garab Dorje explains: "*One* refers to cyclic existence and to the transcendence of suffering. Whatever is one is *nondual*. Whatever is one is the *meaning of*

reality" (f. 56a3-4).

43 This also appears in the *Manjushrinamasaṃgiti* with the last word of the second line as *'jig pa med*, a Tibetan term meaning indestructible (f. 7a1). In the different editions of the *Mejung*, it appears as *'jigs med* or *'jigs pa med*, meaning fearless. Vimalamitra's commentary reads *'jigs* and explains as follows: "Since it is not conquered by another, it is fearless" (f. 28a2). Likewise, Garab Dorje states: "Being nonconceptual wisdom, it is not intimidated by phenomena of cyclic existence. . ." (f. 56a4).

44 The first two of the above three sentences, *There is no letter* and *yet has no form*, with slightly different wording and separated by three other lines, are also found in the *Manjushrinamasaṃgiti* as: *sangs sngags don kun skyed pa po//...// rnam pa thams cad rnam pa med* (f. 7b7). As to the first line, Garab Dorje explains, "*You are the creator of all content of the Secret Mantra* means that through the elaborations of the Secret Mantra that stem from the [primordial] base that is the Secret Mantra's root, the indication for this [base] and its realization are generated" (f. 59a). He explains the second line as follows: *Includes all forms and yet is without form* means that [the primordial base] possesses the aspects of the three *kayas* or dimensions [that are its] qualities, yet it is not present as any characteristic" (f. 59a1-2).

The last sentence: *Since [you are] devoid of branches, you are beyond reckoning* (*yan lag med pa'i rtsis las 'das)* is found in some Tibetan translations of the *Manjushrinamasaṃgiti* such as the *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (Kahthog, vol. 4, f. 11b2), while in some other translations the sentence appears as *[You are] beyond that which has aspects and that which does not have aspects (cha med cha ldan las 'das pa*) (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, 7b7). Garab Dorje explains as follows: "*Devoid of branches, you are beyond reckoning*, means that [as] the dimension of reality, the total freedom from elaborations, it is not present as reckonings and numbers [as explained] above [in relation to letters and deities]" (f. 59a1).

Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes these sentences while discussing the view of nonduality (*gnyis su med par lta ba*) (LEC, f. 185a6-b1). See below, n. 146.

The same lines are quoted in EIM (p.14) in the explanation of the nature of the final attainment. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu explains: "*You are the primordial state that includes all forms yet has no form* means that everything is included in the real nature of each individual, which is self-perfected. Yet this all-inclusive nature does not have any concreteness or materiality. *Since you are devoid of branches, you are beyond reckoning* means that the real nature of

the individual is beyond any notion and analysis" (CNN, OC).

45 This line, *You are that which is understood by all the buddhas*, and the one after the next, *The unsurpassable enlightenment of the buddhas* (*sangs rgyas kun gyi rtogs bya ba//sangs rgyas byang chub bla na med*) appear together in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*. Garab Dorje explains as follows: "*That which is understood by all buddhas* means that the wisdom of one's own pure awareness itself is understood by all buddhas of the three times; it is present in oneself as one's own inherent attribute. *The unsurpassable enlightenment of the buddhas* means that [enlightenment] is the nature that is one's inherent attribute. [Since] there is nothing higher, it is unsurpassable" (f. 58b6-7).

Vimalamitra explains the two lines as follows: "Now, the names of the wisdom-being Manjushri will be taught in terms of the all-accomplishing wisdom. In this regard, if one should wonder what is the cause of the enlightened activity [the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* explains:] *That which is understood by all buddhas is the unsurpassable enlightenment of buddhas*, and so forth. [This means that] the nondual dimension of reality is the nature of all buddhas, the total reality that is to be understood. Having understood this [is] the unsurpassable enlightenment of the buddhas" (Toh. 2092, vol. Tshi. f. 31b6-7).

46 Quoting this paragraph while discussing the conduct of the great method (*thabs chen po'i spyod pa*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "This is the conduct of the method of Samantabhadra: from the very beginning, all phenomena without exception are enlightened in the condition of Samantabhadra; therefore, there is nothing to be abandoned or accepted, and thus there are not even the terms 'deviation' and 'obscuration.' Having gained such a firm confidence, not straying from the conduct in which there is nothing to abandon is the conduct of the method of Samantabhadra. The following citations promote the development of confidence [in this principle]"(LEC, f. 227b3-5). And he concludes: "Thus, it is stated that one should neither reject nor accept anything" (LEC, f. 229a4-5).

47 Vimalamitra comments on the above three lines from *And you are the one who transcends*, to *. . . it is immaculate*, which also appear in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (*bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, Kathog ed., vol. 4, f.8a5-6) as follows:

> In order to teach the very pure essence of the primordial authentic condition, [the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* says]: *. . . transcends the body free of attachment...it is subtle, uncontaminated, and [thus] free of the seed [of samsara]. Since it has no*

> *stains and is [thus] beyond stains, it is immaculate.* [This means that the authentic condition] is beyond that which manifests as wisdom free of the mind attached to objects. . . . Since the dull ignore it, it is subtle; and it is free of contamination, that is, free from the ignorance that is the seed for birth in conditioned existence. As its base is free of the stains of conceptuality, it has no [stains]. When the mind that does not understand [the authentic nature] is understood, it becomes free of the stains of unknowing [*rtogs pa* amended to *ma rtogs pa*], and since there is not even attachment to that [understanding], it is immaculate. (f. 24a1-5)

Garab Dorje states: ". . . *transcends the body free of attachment* refers to the precious inner space. . . . *Subtle* means that it is difficult to examine. *Uncontaminated and is [thus] free of the seed [of samsara]* means that for the one who has realization, there is no seed of cyclic existence. *Since it has no stains and [thus] beyond stains, it is immaculate* means that having transcended [them], it does not contain emotions such as anger, [and is thus] free of them" (f. 53a1-4).

48 Quoting the above three lines while discussing self-originated wisdom (*rang byung gi ye shes lta ba*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe comments: "Thus, the totality of qualities [of the wisdom] manifests without being sought. Since [the wisdom] permeates and pervades everything, the *Mejung* states, *My primordial state is subtle, uncontaminated and [thus] free from the seed [of samsara]. Since it has no stains and is [thus] beyond stains, it is immaculate. It abides in all the* sugatas *and in all sentient beings*" (LEC, f. 174a2-4).

49 Garab Dorje explains this line, which also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 6a2) as follows: "*He who has the body of wisdom is the Tathagata,* refers to the five *kayas* or dimensions that blaze [like] the light of precious gems" (f. 53b2).

Vimalamitra explains this and the preceding line of the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* as follows:

> *He who has the stainless, unique eye of wisdom and is the transcendent one* means that the buddhas of the three times perform activities that liberate beings, and it cannot be said that Buddha first arose here and at the end he goes there because, from the very beginning, he has no cause. Since he does not have the stain of dualistic grasping, he [has] the unique eye of wisdom. Since it [has] the body in which the six wisdoms are of the same flavor, it is so named. (f. 24b1-b3)

50 The phrase *manifests in the rays of the Voice* (*gsung gi 'od zer la rol*) is also found in Garab Dorje's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*. In that

context he states:

> *Dispelling the three, infinite [beings] are liberated in three [modes]* means that from the tongue of the dimension of perfect resources, male and female, arise the six letters of the precious sound; that is, by manifesting in the rays of the Voice, the [letters] become the six emanations that dispel the obscurations of body, voice, and mind of the six classes of beings. And liberating countless beings from their [material] bodies, that is, being liberated through the mode [of the practitioners'] higher, medium, or inferior capacity, [they] realize the *kayas* and wisdoms. (f. 51a4-5)

He further remarks: "*The dimension of emanation, the supreme of the dimensions* refers to the six teachers who manifest in the rays of the Voice of the dimension of perfect resources. These [teachers] are superior among the six [types] beings" (f. 59b2-3).

51 Quoting the phrase, *The Tathagata. . . is totally pure like space*, albeit with a different wording, while explaning the nature of the final attainment, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe comments:

> The nature of the final attainments of the nine vehicles as well as the nature of the entirety of cyclic existence is indicated in the expression, ". . . abides in the totality of the actual basis of the wheel of superior inexhaustible ornaments." The same text [the *Mejung*] states: *In this way, the entire vision is the Tathagata that has the body of wisdom. He abides in the light of the Body and manifests in the rays of the Voice. Mind is the pure expanse of space*. (EIM, p. 14)

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments as follows: "The entirety of the individual's vision, pure and impure, is the dimension of wisdom, that is, it is like [that of] the totally realized being and his dimension. The manifestation through the aspect of the Body abides as the light, essence of the five elements, and, through the aspect of the Voice it manifests as rays. And the state of the mind resembles space" (CNN, OC).

The last line of the paragraph, which resembles one found in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, states: "Like space, he abides in absolute sameness"(*mkha' ltar mnyam pa nyid la gnas*) (Toh. 360, f. 5b1). Garab Dorje explains: "*Like space, he abides in absolute sameness* means that the dimension of perfect resources and its retinue and the [beings] who later become buddhas, abide in an indivisible state of realization through the precious inner dimension" (f. 51a6-7).

52 On the expression *mnga' mdzad*, to govern, Garab Dorje in his commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* states: "Since one's unobstructed vision manifests in all kinds of things, pure awareness is the lord of everything, that

is, it governs [all]" (f. 48a1-2).

"To govern means that when the practitioner dwells in the state of contemplation, everything, without exception, is integrated in that state. Thus, to govern here does not imply the intentional action of controlling something" (CNN, OC).

53 This may signify volition in which there is no grasping for the objects of the individual sense perceptions.

54 "This means that the dimension of perfect resources, here represented by Vairocana, possesses the perfect potentiality of all the other Bodies of enlightenment" (CNN, OC).

55 Garab Dorje states:

> Now, [the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*] will explain the meaning of emptiness that is the nature of the base: *The great Vairocana, the Buddha,* refers to the wisdom of the expanse of the true nature of reality, the knowable's emptiness of identity. It is the blue light that holds this characteristic. The dimension that bears this meaning is that of Vairocana, the five Bodies' dimension of pure awareness that manifests as the one whose face looks in the ten directions. Since its light manifests [as] the mandala of the dimension of perfect resources, it is the main dimension of perfect resources. (f. 44b1-2)

56 Consciousness basis of all (Tib. *kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*; Skt. *alayavijnana*) is one of the group of eight consciousnesses (*rnam shes tshogs brgyad*) whose existence is asserted by the Cittamatra and by some subdivisions of the Madhyamika trends of Buddhist philosophy. This consciousness serves as the storehouse for the habitual tendencies (*bag chags*) created by past actions, and thus forms the basis for the appearance of karmic vision.

57 Tib. *rdo rje*; Skt *vajra:* the nature that is indivisibile (*mi phyed pa*), cannot be cut (*mi chod pa*), and cannot be destroyed (*mi shigs pa*).

58 Quoting this sentence from the *Mejung*, in his explanation of the search for the [ideal] meditation place, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> Since, when all the worlds and their inhabitants spontaneously manifest as the natural wisdom, there is nothing that is not wisdom, wherever one dwells, [whether] in a solitary place [or] a crowded market, naturally, by virtue [of the understanding] of the total self, one gains assurance of the true meaning of solitude. Therefore, it is [only] for the sake of leading others that [one speaks of] an isolated place, an auspicious [place] in which the Buddha had set foot, blessed by practitioners, where the land is not inimical, [where] there are no enemies [to hinder] contemplation, where the climate is mild and light and darkness are

> balanced, a place considered suitable because there can be no interruptions of life and life's necessities, and [one speaks of] cleaning the place. (EIM, p. 5)

Commenting on this sentence, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu says: "*The entire billion world systems of the universe are my domain* means that the entire universe is the dimension of Samantabhadra, the primordial state. *My abode* means the place where one lives. *Celestial palace* refers to the pure realm of the divine mansion of the mandala" (CNN, OC).

59 Before quoting various sources and the above five lines of our text, in his discussion on the view of total bliss (*bde ba chen por lta ba*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says: "Understanding the essential point of this principle, the pure awareness of one's state manifests clearly as total bliss, and the transmigration in the lower forms of existence is clearly manifest as total bliss; thus all fields of experience, excluding none, are pure" (LEC. f. 179a4-5). See also below, nn. 95, 104, and 105.

60 The perfection of the teacher and of the listeners mentioned in the preceding two sentences of our text are two of the five perfect conditions (Tib. *phun sum tshogs pa lnga*) or five certainties (*nges pa lnga*) that characterize the dimension of perfect resources: teaching (*chos*), time (*dus*), teacher (*ston pa*), place (*gnas*), and retinue (*'khor*).

61 The above four sentences are quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe in LEC in the section on the view of total bliss (f. 189b6-7). See below, n. 95.

62 This last line is only present in the *Bai ro rgyud 'bum* and in the mTshams brag editions of our text.

63 This paragraph is also quoted in LEC (f. 163a4-b2). For its meaning according to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, see the following note.

64 Commenting on the lines of the above paragraph, while discussing the view of spontaneous perfection (*lhun gyis grub par lta ba*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains:

> This means that all the qualities are complete, that is, the concrete reality is the mandala of the *kayas* and of the wisdoms. The fortunate disciple understands this principle without trying to understand it. Since there is nothing to be done in order to know [this principle] because such is the originary state, when one discovers this principle, all our sensory objects clearly manifest as [that] same precious gem, spontaneously perfected. (LEC. f. 163b2-4)

65 For the meaning of this paragraph according to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, see previous note.

66 In the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* contained in the Derge (sDe dge) *bKa'gyur*,

this line appears as *sna tshogs gzugs can yid rang bzhin* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 5a4). In Vimalamitra's commentary as in most of the editions of the our text, it appears as: *sna tshogs gzugs can yid las skyes* (f. 20a4). Commenting on this line in the context of its location in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, Vimalamitra says: " *The variety of forms originating from the mind. . .* [means that] the dimension of emanation (Skt. *nirmanakaya*) has many forms arising from the mind that liberate into wisdom" (f. 20a4).

67 This probably refers to the real nature of the eight classes of consciousness (Tib. *rnam shes tshogs brgyad*): the five sense consciousnesses (*sgo lnga'i dbang shes*), the mental consciousness (*yid*), the afflicted consciousness (*nyon yid*), and the consciousness basis of all (*kun gzhi rnam shes*).

68 The forms of behavior mentioned in the two preceding paragraphs relate to particular commitments in the Nyingmapa Mahayoga praxis and to exceptional vows of the six families of Highest Tantras of the New schools: the Kagyü, Sakya, and Gelug. In Mahayoga in general, there are five particular commitments prescribing what to practice, possessing both provisional and hidden meanings.

To fulfill the provisional meaning, one engages in killing (that is, liberating a harmful being from the bondage of this life for one's own and others' benefit. Although performed exclusively from authentic compassion and thus without animosity, externally this practice appears to be devoid of compassion); sexual union (without regard for sociocultural limitations, in which one withholds the semen, draws it upward and spreads it throughout the bodily chakras and channels as an offering to the mandala of deities visualized in one's body); theft; speaking untruth; and speaking outrageously, provided these are not performed with selfish motives, but as a skillful means to benefit others.

The hidden meanings of these commitments are as follows: killing (literally, liberation, Tib. *sgrol ba*) means to sever the life of dualistic thought through self-experienced wisdom; engaging in sexual union means to actualize the immutable bliss through the pleasure of the melting of the seminal essence while in union (*sbyor ba*) with a consort; stealing is to steal the seminal essence (bliss) from the consort; speaking untruth is to say that living beings are already liberated from the apparent yet nonexistent cycle of existence; speaking outrageously is to speak without inhibitions from an inexpressible state of spiritual accomplishment. See Kongtrul's *Buddhist Ethics* (p. 282; pp. 253-56).

69 Before quoting this phrase, while discussing the appropriate conduct free of effort, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> Being free from effort, the conduct in which there is no intent to pursue is as follows: unlike in Mahayoga, nothing is intentionally done in order to effect some [particular result], for example, in accordance with contemplation alone; thus, there is nothing to be undertaken. In fact, if one were to undertake nonaction, it would become conduct involving action. Therefore, here, in a natural way, there is nothing to do and nothing to undertake. Well then, if there is nothing to do, does one sit without doing anything? [To this objection] I reply that one does not even fixate on sitting: if sitting exists, there will also be nonsitting; but since one does not fixate on the four types of conduct that are never interrupted, whatever one does, nothing is done. There is nothing to do. There is not even any leaving aside of what one has [to do]. When one has deep confidence in this conduct, there is nothing to do intentionally, such as the offering, ritual recitation, and so forth, of the inferior [vehicles]. (LEC, f. 226a1-5)

70 "A sentient being (*sems can*) is one who is bound to the notion of an I and the passions that arise from it. Killing means to dispel such notion and passions, and lead them to the knowledge of their true nature" (CNN, OC).

71 The words *reborn as their children* are used (along with other phrases) in the context of the Mahayana to express joy upon making the commitment of the altruistic mind of enlightenment. See Kongtrul's *Buddhist Ethics*, p.175.

72 Quoting this paragraph while discussing the principle of the total self (Tib. *bdag nyid chen por lta ba*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, says: "Thus, this means 'Understand me, the primordial state that is free from limitations'" (LEC, f. 169b3).

73 Quoting this parapraph while discussing the principle of the total self, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "Thus, the one who conquers all emotions and their traces without having abandoned them is the total self" (LEC, f. 169b4-5).

74 According to the ancient Indo-Tibetan cosmology, a world system undergoes four phases (Tib. *bskal pa*; Skt. *kalpa*): formation, abiding, destruction, and voidness. In the phase of destruction the world is consumed by fire, wind, or water. See Kongtrul's *Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra, and Dzogchen*.

75 Quoting this paragraph while discussing the principle of the total self, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says:

> All manifests [in the total self], yet at a mere relative level, [it is explained that]

the buddhas have already encountered [this principle] in that they have really understood it; thus, having already become the total self, they have been consumed [by it]. And since sentient beings are still to be liberated, [the *Mejung*] says: *Bow down to me, [for I]. . . still have to consume [all sentient beings]*. Nonetheless, essentially, all [buddhas and beings] without exception are included in that [state]. (LEC, f. 170a3-4)

76 This sentence might mean that the sage does not emit the material semen as an offering to the deities as is done in tantric practices, but emits the semen of one's self, that is, he generates the knowledge of the primordial state through the union with one's self.

77 This sentence might be expressing the idea that if one discovers the primordial state and one's body is, metaphorically, beautified by such knowledge, regarding one's body is like beholding the Buddha.

78 The first part of this sentence: *The mind has no identity to be perceived* is quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe in the context of explaining the unmistaken manner of settling the mind in meditation (EIM). See above, nn. 12, 13.

79 Quoting this paragraph while discussing the three methods for leaving the mind in a meditative state, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe explains:

In any case, since [the true nature of the mind] is free from the above [defects], it is only from the conventional perspective that the manner of leaving the mind [in the meditative state is explained]. In general, [the three methods] consist of the method for attaining [this state], the method for stabilizing it, and the method for not fixing on anything. [But] it is through the inner mode of the view that [the three methods] are revealed. In this regard, the yogin of Ati [understands that] the meditation is the authentic principle that has been decisively ascertained above; [this means that] this principle and the one who meditates are inseparable. Thus, since they are one, they are the essence of reality just as it is. Thus, the yogin of Ati leaves the mind just as it is, without purposefully doing so.

In the same way, since the true nature of reality is spontaneously present, one's own pure awareness is left in the spontaneous [state]. The true nature of reality is clearly manifest in the condition of the great sphere; thus, one's own awareness, too, is left in the [state] of the great sphere. Since the principle is unrelated to action and effort, one's own awareness is unrelated to action and effort. The true nature of reality is devoid of duality; thus, awareness is free of duality. The true nature of reality is free of objectives; thus, pure awareness is free of objectives. The true nature of reality is spontaneous wisdom; thus, one's own awareness is self-originated wisdom.

The true nature of reality is the universal total self; thus, the mind is the total self. The true nature of reality does not think about all [phenomena]; thus, the mind does not think about anything. The true nature of reality does not move in

> the slightest; thus, the mind does not move in the slightest. The true nature of reality does not relate to any [object]; thus, the mind does not relate to any [object]. The true nature of reality is not disturbed; thus, the mind is not disturbed. The true nature of reality does not appear in any way; thus, the mind does not appear in any way. In the natural state of reality one does not examine, analyze, search, [or] adopt [anything]; thus, the mind does not examine, analyze, search, [or] adopt [anything]. The true nature of reality is not born and does not cease; thus, even one's own mind is never born, does not abide anywhere, and never ceases. The state of the true nature of reality does not intentionally act, does not modify, and does not alter; thus, one's own mind, too, does not intentionally act, does not modify, and does not alter.
>
> The true nature of reality is clear and nonconceptual; thus, one's own pure awareness, too, is clear and nonconceptual. The true nature of reality does not emerge, does not enter, and is devoid of notions; thus, one's own awareness also does not emerge, does not enter, and is devoid of notions.
>
> The true nature of reality does not dwell even in the absence of concepts, of movement, or of reference point; thus, one's own mind, too, does not dwell even in the absence of concepts, of movement, or of reference point. The essential condition of phenomena is continuous from the beginning, devoid of separation [into] the meditation session and the pause between [sessions]; thus, one's own pure awareness is the great continuity devoid of meditation session and pause between [sessions]. Why is this so? That in which the true nature of reality is just as it is, too, is nothing but one's own awareness. One who follows this system does not have even the notion of instantaneity. (LEC, ff. 206b4-207b6)

He states further, "Thus, it is clear that there is no object [on which to leave the mind]" (LEC, f. 208a1).

Moreover, quoting this small paragraph in the context of the manner of settling the mind in meditation, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> Thus, when the meditator who is not free from attachment experiences the desire for a luminous wisdom and the fear of falling into lack of discernment due to the lack of thinking, or [of falling] into a state of cessation [like that of the Hinayana] and experiences doubt, these are dispelled as before. Here, with the understanding of the unique lack of identity [of phenomena], one remains without concepts, for there is no thought grasping the duality of self and other that would fear fabrications in relation to objects and visions. (EIM, p. 9)

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments: "*When [one] abides in the essence of enlightenment*, means 'when one abides in the primordial state.' . . . *The condition of emptiness is not [experienced] as an object* means that when in that state one sees the phenomena that are empty, in that seeing there is no duality of subject and object. . . . *Thus, one does not even dwell [in emptiness]*

means that one does not even abide in the concept of emptiness" (CNN, OC).

80 Quoting this line while explaining the perfect degree of meditative experience, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says:

> Sentient beings are enlightened from the very beginning; therefore, any thought that arises is wisdom. It is the very pure awareness in which there is nothing to purify or to abandon, and [in which even the idea] of modifying the mind—since it is unobstructed by concepts or obscurations—does not arise. Moreover, since it is an unobstructed spontaneous presence that does not need to be modified by an antidote, it is called marvelous. (EIM, p.11)

81 Commenting on a line from the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* closely resembling this one from the *Mejung*, Garab Dorje states: "*The greatness of the mind of all buddhas* refers to the self-originated wisdom of pure awareness" (f. 54a6).

82 This sentence closely resembles a line from the *Manjushrinamasamgiti: sangs rgyas kun gyi thugs che ba//sangs rgyas kun gyi thugs la gnas* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 6a6). Garab Dorje explains its meaning as follows: "*The great Mind of all buddhas* refers to the self-originated wisdom of pure awareness. *Abides in the Mind of all buddhas* refers to the place of abiding, that is, the precious heart (Skt. *citta*)" (f. 54a6).

83 As mentioned in the words of the Teacher, the primordial state of all buddhas abides in the mind, that is, it is not found in scriptures or words, but in one's consciousness, and is to be known through self-knowledge.

84 In the context of the Mahayana sutras the transcendent wisdom (Tib. *ye shes kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*) is the tenth means of transcendence (Tib. *phar phyin;* Skt. *paramita*).

85 The line . . . *is the supreme letter that is the great meaning* (*don chen yi ge dam pa ste*) appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* in the Derge (sDe dge) *bKa' 'gyur* with a slightly different wording: *don chen 'gyur med dam pa yin* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 3a3).

Garab Dorje's commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (where the line appears as *don chen yi ge dam pa yin*, f. 42b3) explains as follows:

> A *is the supreme of all letters* means that, just as the letter *A* is the essence of all letters, pure awareness is superior to the five wisdoms and the [five] elements. *It is the sublime letter of total reality* means that, unlike the letter *A* or the words and names that depend on it, pure awareness is the meaning of the indivisible, self-originated Body of reality that is naturally pure. For example, the letter *A* comes from within and is like the abode of other letters; thus, it is a self-originated sound. Being self-originated, it is unborn. Likewise, the phenomena of cyclic existence and its transcendence arise from the [primordial state], yet that

base, having no causes and conditions, is self-originated; thus, it is without birth. (f. 42b2-4)

Commenting on the following lines of the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*: *'di ltar sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das//rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas a yig las byung//don chen 'gyur med dam pa yin* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 3a2-3), Vimalamitra says:

> As to the cause from which the fully enlightened one arises, he arises from having meditated on the unborn [reality]. Therefore [the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* says], *The fully enlightened one arises from* A. Well then, why does he arise only from the lettter *A*? [*Because*] A *is the supreme of all letters*. In what way is it supreme? Since it is the letter that reveals the great meaning of the Dharma, it is the sacred letter that is the great meaning. Why is that? Since it reveals the meaning of the unborn that is the great meaning, *it comes from within and is unborn*. All other letters depend on the teeth, tongue, lips, upper palate, and so on, but the letter *A* does not depend on them. It arises naturally from within and is therefore the supreme of all letters. (Toh. 2092, vol. Tshi, f. 10a6-b1)

Quoting these lines from our text in the explanation of the signs of meditation, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> The signs of meditation are: [having a feeling of] physical lightness, [enjoying] good health, feeling as if one had no body, gaining the lesser and greater [types of] physical forbearance, [having] no anxiety about birth and death, not being disheartened by cyclic existence, not fearing the precipice of the lower existences, regarding the eight wordly concerns with indifference, and lacking hope and fear. Without wishing to be free of [such] distress, one [simply] does not experience suffering; this [freedom] arises [spontaneously] from within. The same text says: *The desire for enlightenment is a great sickness. Just as the earth [does not reach for] the sky, do not search [for enlightenment], for the essence of the true nature of reality springs forth from within*. And the same text [the *Mejung*] states: *The pure awareness of the fortunate ones is the supreme letter that is the great meaning: it springs forth from within and is without birth*. (EIM, pp.11-12)

86 This sentence also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 4a3). Garab Dorje explains it as follows: "Cyclic existence and its transcendence are the energy of wisdom" (f. 47b5).

87 The eight offering goddesses (*lha mo brgyad*), also known as eight female bodhisattvas, are Lasya, Malya, Gita, Nirti, Pushpa, Dhupa, Aloka, and Gandha. Symbols of the purity of the four sense objects (form, smell, sound, and taste) and the four times (past, present, future, and undefined time), the eight offering goddesses are generally visualized in tantric mandalas as the consorts of the eight bodhisattvas. Lasya, consort of Kshitigarbha, offers

beauty; Malya, consort of akashagarbha, offers garlands; Gita, consort of Vajrapani, offers song; Nirti, consort of Avalokiteshvara, offer dance; Pushpa, consort of Sarvanivaranavishkambhin, offers flowers; Dhupa, consort of Maitreya, offers incense; Aloka, consort of Samantabhadra, offers light; and Gandha, consort of Manjushri, offers perfume.

88 Tib. *rdzas brgyad:* substances used to implement the eight siddhis (*dngos grub)* such as the sword, eye-salve, and so on. The eight attainments or powers are those of mantra (*sngags*), the capacity, in both peaceful and wrathful modes, to influence beings by means of mantras; of medicine (*sman*), the elixir of virility and longevity (*bcud len*); of the fire offering (*sbyin sreg*), the ability to perform the various kinds of actions (appeasing, enriching, and so forth) through fire rituals; of powders (*phye ma*), the powder or the pills (*ril bu*) that, when put in the mouth, enable the yogin to become invisible or to assume any form desired (alternatively, it refers to the drop of substance applied to the forehead that imparts the same powers); of eye-salve (*smig sman*) that enables one to see the three realms; and of fleet-footedness (*rkang mgyogs*) that enables one to travel great distances in short times. These are powers gained in dependence on a substance or object. If the yogin is separated from these substances or objects, he loses the corresponding powers. These eight powers are presented in slightly different ways depending on the tantra. For an extensive discussion, see Kongtrul's *Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal.*

89 Tib. *yi ge 'khor lo tshogs chen:* also know as the thirteenth level of enlightenment, this is the highest level of realization described in Mahayoga. For details, see Kongtrul's explanation in Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's *The Precious Vase* and in his forthcoming work, *The Gate to Enter the Teaching: The Words of the Great Masters.*

90 Major and minor marks (Tib. *mtshan dang dpe byed*): thirty-two major and eighty minor marks on a buddha's body (*sku mtshan dpe*) that are the result of specific wholesome deeds. For example, as a result of his generosity, a buddha's palms and soles are marked by wheels; because he has not destroyed others' friendship through slander, his fingers and toes are connected by a web, and so on. See Kongtrul's *Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal*.

91 "This and the next two cryptic paragraphs may be related to the potentiality of the primordial state. Thus, the ordinary voice (Tib. *ngag*) representing sound and being the origin of everything, is the Body of the past (*'das pa'i sku*). The ordinary body (*lus*), representing that which manifests now, is the

Body of the present (*da ltar byung ba'i sku*). The ordinary mind (*sems*), the essence of which is the source of the manifestations, is the Body of the future (*ma byung ba'i sku*)" (CNN, OC).

92 This line, with a slight variation, also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti: yang dag bdag med de bzhin nyid//yang dag mtha' ste yi ge med* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 5a3). Garab Dorje explains: "*Perfect, natural condition devoid of identity* means that in the true nature of reality, that is. . . the wisdom of pure awareness, there is no self [created by] habitual tendencies, and the three *kayas* or dimensions are inseparably united. *The true limit is beyond letters* means that the dimension of reality is inexpressible" (f. 50a 3-4).

93 A similar passage is also found in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti:*

> *mchod pa chen po 'dod chags che//sems can thams cad dga' bar byed//mchod pa chen po zhe sdang che//nyon mongs kun gyi dgra che ba//mchod pa chen po gti mug che//gti mug blo ste gti mug sel//mchod pa chen po khro ba che//khro ba chen po dgra che ba //mchod pa chen po chags pa che//chags pa thams cad sel bar byed//'dod chags chen po bde ba che//dga' ba chen po mgu ba che*. (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f. 3a3-5)

Commenting on these lines, Garab Dorje states:

> *Great offering is total attachment* indicates the characteristics of wisdom. Turning away from the ordinary attachment of beings, [total attachment] is the unobstructed scrutinizing intelligence of pure awareness that is the remedy for that [attachment]; [thus,] it is the discerning wisdom. *It brings joy to all beings* means that the great potentiality effortlessly reveals attachment as wisdom, and thus [attachment] is one [with wisdom]; thus it is joy. *Great offering is total anger* means that [anger] dispels the emotions of beings in that it is unobstructed pure awareness, the mirror-like wisdom. *The great enemy of all emotions* means that emotions do not exist, as they are unobstructed wisdom. *Great offering is total ignorance* means that pure awareness is the knowledge that does not differentiate, as it is wisdom of the expanse of the true nature of reality. *The ignorant mind* refers to the severing [nature of] nonconceptual knowledge. *Dispels ignorance* means that [ignorance] does not [really] exist. *Great offering is the total anger* means that no emotions associated with duality exist, as they are self-originated wisdom manifesting as light. *Great anger is the total enemy* refers to the overcoming of the anger that is ignorance. *Great offering is total attachment* refers to the unalloyed bliss. *It dispels all attachment* means that it [does nor refute] concepts. *Great desire is total bliss* means that by understanding [the deviance of] the desire to realize one's Body and one's wisdom by oneself, one is free from activities and effort. Alternatively, [the above phrase refers to] bliss devoid of attachment. Enjoying the nondual reality, [such bliss] is without emotion. (ff. 42b6-43a4)

In his commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, Vimalamitra states:

> Well then, how are the emotions overcome? [The *ManjuShrinamasamgiti*] states: *Great offering is total attachment that brings joy to all beings*, and so on. Offering, since it pleases the deity, is [called] "offering." This meaning accords with the principle that, without having to be abandoned, the emotions are wisdom; they are an offering [made] by oneself. This applies to all [emotions]. As to the word "great," for example, just as the mantra for curing poisons is called "mantra [for] poisons," this [offering] is called "great" since it overcomes its opponent. "Attachment" is the spontaneous attachment to the absolute sameness of emotions. Such [attachment] frees one from perverse attachment and gives rise to unalloyed joy. *Great offering is total anger, the great enemy of all the emotions* [means that] since [total anger] possesses the anger that overcomes concepts and since it overcomes ordinary anger, it is the great enemy. *Great offering is total ignorance. The ignorant mind dispels ignorance* [means that] since [total ignorance] possesses the ultimate ignorance that does not differentiate phenomena, it dispels ordinary ignorance. *Great offering is total wrath, the total wrath that is the great enemy* [means that] since it does not allow emotions to arise, it is "great wrath," and since it dispels ordinary wrath, it is called "great enemy." *Great offering is total attachment that dispels all attachments* [refers to] attachment to the ultimate unalloyed bliss, that which dispels the ordinary clinging of avarice. In this regard, the higher is the overcoming agent and the lower is the factor that is overcome. Applying the secret instructions to these, there are four types [of offerings]: since it frees disciples who are attached to these emotions through the method of a conduct similar to that of these emotions but one that does not abandon them, it is the liberative offering of a similar conduct. Since it transforms the emotions into the five wisdoms, it is the offering of the wisdom of transformation. Since it frees one from the five emotions and [causes one] to attain the Great Symbol of the dimensions of the five families, it is the offering of the symbol of liberation. Since upon examination, emotions are [found] to be devoid of [any] essence but exist as the real true nature of reality, this is the offering of the pure nature. *Great attachment is total joy, the great delight that is the great contentment* [means that] since it teaches the Dharma and gives rise to the bliss of liberation in those beings who desire liberation, it is joy; and since it realizes the true reality, it brings contentment. (ff. 10b2-11a3)

94 Quoting this sentence while discussing the base as it is, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says: "This citation teaches that the buddhas and the sentient beings do not exist, yet [they] appear; [they] exist and yet do not exist" (LEC, f. 194b3).

95 After quoting the above two lines, while discussing the view of total bliss, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "In such a state, the deepest hell has been emptied, the shape of cyclic existence has been eliminated, the lower forms of

existence have been swept away, the misunderstandings have arisen as the path of enlightenment, the universe has been placed in total bliss, the deviations and obscurations have been carried in the total bliss, suffering has become enjoyment; thus, one dwells throughout the three times in the delightful womb of total bliss, without [intentionally] settling there" (LEC, f. 180a1-4).

96 This line also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (Toh. 360, vol. Ka, f.7a4).

97 The same line appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (f.7a4-5). Garab Dorje comments as follows: "*Like space, [you] have no attachment* means that [the primordial state] is without both freedom from attachment and the absence of attachment, or alternatively that, like space, it abides from the beginning" (f. 57a1-2).

Vimalamitra explains this sentence along with another two with a different slant:

> Prior to accomplishing the benefit of beings, compassion has to be generated. [Thus, the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* says:] *[His] strong attachment for all beings, like space, is without attachment. Pervading the mind of all beings, [he is] swift as the mind [in accomplishing the benefit of] all beings.* [The Buddha] has compassionate attachment to all beings as a mother to her only child. If one should wonder if this [attachment] does not become a conceptual characteristic, [the answer is:] since he knows the ultimate to be like space, ordinary attachment is eliminated. Moreover, he pervades the mind of all beings and accomplishes the benefit of beings as swiftly as the mind. (f. 29a2-3)

98 This line, which also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (Toh. 360, vol.Ka, f.7a5), is explained by Garab Dorje as follows: "*You know the [real] nature of the five aggregates* refers to the knowledge of the ultimate true nature of the aggregates, just as it is" (f. 57a3-4).

Vimalamitra explains it along with three other lines as follows:

> With regard to that, in order to explain that [the buddhas] know those who are to be benefited, [the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* says]: *He knows the capacities of all beings; he attracts the mind of all beings; he knows that the nature of the five aggregates is also that [condition]. He possesses the perfectly pure five aggregates.* [These lines mean that] he knows the capacities of all beings —higher, medium, and lesser—and knows all their aspirations. Since he reveals himself in a form on which one never tires of gazing, he attracts the mind of sentient beings; and as he changes the mind with concepts to a nonconceptual state, he also attracts [the mind]. Moreover, he knows the nature of the five aggregates to be relative, like an illusion and, in the ultimate sense, unborn. And he possesses the five perfectly pure aggregates of ethical conduct, of

contemplation, of knowledge, the aggregate of complete liberation, and the aggregate of [the vision of] the wisdom of complete liberation. (f. 29a 4-6)

99 To conclude the discussion of the universal way of Ati in which he quotes the preceding two paragraphs, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: “Hence, in the absence of this path, not even the Victorious Ones appear. Despite the paths followed, without this [universal path of nonaction] one will not become liberated from the prison of effort, and for living beings the ocean of cyclic existence will never dry up. And in order to establish living beings in bliss, without having established them [intentionally] due to nonaction, one needs to rely on this path” (LEC, f. 158a1-3).

100 In the context of the Mahayana, the levels of realization (Tib. *sa*; Skt. *bhumi*) are the ten levels of the bodhisattva (*sa bcu*). In his commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti*, Vimalamitra explains them in the following way:

Since one has attained the supramundane mind, the first level is [called] “joyful.” Since one has been freed from the stains of a violated morality, the second level is [called] “stainless.” Since one has attained the supremely clear wisdom, the third level is [called] luminous. Since one radiates the light of the factors conducive to enlightenment, the fourth level is [called] “radiant.” Since in this [level], contemplation and working for others’ benefit are both present, and thus one trains the mind that is difficult to train, the fifth level is [called] “difficult to train in.” Since one has realized the contemplation beyond conceptual characteristics, the sixth level is [called] “realized.” Since one has gone far from conceptual characteristics, the seventh level is [called] “gone far.” Since one dwells in contemplation without being moved by any conceptual characteristics, the eighth level is [called] “immovable.” Since one possesses a great intelligence for teaching the Dharma to students, the ninth level is [called] “excellent intelligence.” Since one possesses great clouds of qualities that ripen the crops of the students’ qualities through the rain of teaching, the tenth level is [called] “cloud of teaching.” (f. 20b3-21a1)

Garab Dorje in his commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* reinterprets the ten levels in the light of the Dzogchen teaching as follows:

When the oral teaching is proclaimed through the four introductions, by seeing that the *kayas* and wisdoms abide within oneself, there is the “joyful” [level]. With confidence in that, to be without doubt is the “stainless” [level]. When, by differentiating mind and wisdom one governs the mind, conceptual characteristics are overcome and one is at the point of not needing to reveal these [qualities] to others (*de bzhin la* amended to *de gzhan la*), one is “luminous.”Accomplishing the benefit of others is the “radiant” [level]. When there is no such understanding, the five and the three poisons are difficult to conquer. However, [when] this superior realization is born in one’s mind and the

> five and the three poisons liberate as the five wisdoms, one is at the [level] "difficult to train in." The sixth [level,] "the realized," is the correct knowledge of the meaning of the three [precious] inner spaces [of the self-perfection of the base, of the display of the base, of the self-perfected final attainment] and of the three *kayas*. The seventh, "gone far," is the freedom from a contaminated result [that is, one's body]. The eighth, "immovable," is the separation of the pure and impure parts of the elements [of one's body]. The ninth, "excellent intelligence," is the purpose manifesting from oneself. The tenth, "cloud of teaching," is mastery of the teaching. (f. 45a1-b3)

101 This alludes to the generation of the altruistic intent to attain enlightenment (Tib. *byang chub sems*) done in the Mahayana through the ritual acceptance of a commitment, and in the Secret Mantra through a rite involving visualizations, and so on.

102 This paragraph is quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe while discussing freedom from searching (Tib. *rtsol ba dang bral ba*), which he explains through twenty points. He states: "Thus, through the twenty points [the state is already perfected; hence,] how could someone search for something? The seeker and the search are nonexistent from the beginning" (LEC, f. 176a1-2).

And further:

> According to a mode [of the teaching], the profound understanding of the principle of freedom from action is as follows: though one offers the entire threefold thousand universe, the superior beings are not pleased; although one treads [the path] for ages, the level [of enlightenment] is not achieved; whatever virtuous action of the three doors one performs, one does not become buddha; even though one seeks the state of buddha in the four times, it will not be found; even though one may meditate continuously, there is nothing to do to make the principle clear; even if one rolls over or stands on one's head, however one turns, one does not deviate from the essential principle because the great principle is already [clear] in oneself. (LEC, ff. 177b5-178a2)

103 This line is quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe while discussing the conduct of spontaneous perfection (Tib. *lhun grub kyi spyod pa*): "As to the conduct of the spontaneous perfection, everything is enlightenment; [therefore] the word 'cyclic existence' does not exist. The result that is partially manifest, comparable to the full moon of the eighth month, is the conduct. In all directions there is nothing that is not the activity of the Buddha; therefore, here all the forms of conduct are the activity [of the Buddha]" (LEC, f. 229a5-6).

104 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this paragraph in the context of the great purpose of the view beyond objectives in order to explain that one's

perceptual field is naturally pure:

> Although the natural condition just as it is has nothing to be purified, when one conclusively gains confidence that this perceptual field seen as the ordinary three worlds due to sentient beings' lack of understanding is [in fact] the primordial state, without renouncing the three worlds, they are naturally liberated in their own condition; thus, like a wish-fulfilling precious gem, [they] clearly manifest as the self-perfected primordial state. (EIM, p. 2)

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments: "Thus, our text says that the person who has discovered the precious gem in the three worlds, that is, the real nature of the three worlds, without the need to change anything, can obtain whatever he or she wishes. And also, the three worlds become just as one desires them to be. This is no longer a dualistic appearance, for they are integrated in one's state of contemplation" (CNN, OC). See also nn. 95 above and nn. 105, 107 below.

105 Quoting this paragraph while discussing the view of total bliss (Tib. *bde ba chen por lta ba*), Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "Regarding this principle that pertains to the secret instruction of one's own pure awareness, [it is explained that] there is nothing else [for which to search], in fact [total bliss] is the self; therefore, in this [state] there are no mental projections, there is no complacency, and nothing is conceptualized" (LEC, f. 180a6-b1).

106 In the vehicle of the means of transcendence (Tib. *phar phyin theg pa*) it is asserted that in order to attain enlightenment one must gather the two accumulations (*tshogs gnyis*) of merit and wisdom for countless eons.

107 Before quoting this paragraph, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "Thus, it is not as if [the world] has become what is not; it means that that which is has manifested in a natural way. Therefore, there is no [merit or wisdom] to accumulate or seek at the moment. [In] anything one does or experiences, there is neither loss nor accumulation" (LEC, f. 163b5-6).

108 This means not to invite the deity to merge into oneself as is done in tantric rituals, but rather to contemplate one's primordial condition.

109 Teacher (Tib. *ston pa*) usually refers to the founder of a spiritual tradition, like the Buddha.

110 This last line, which also appears in the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* (Toh. 360, vol.Ka, f. 7b-1), is explained by Garab Dorje as follows: "All aforementioned vehicles arise as three: [the vehicle] of *shravakas*, *pratyekas*, and bodhisattvas, and abide as a single [vehicle] that is the perfect result of the Secret Mantra alone" (f. 57b6). Here, Secret Mantra as specified by Garab

Dorje in his commentary refers to the most extraordinary immaterial wisdom of pure awareness.

Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this line from the *Mejung* while discussing the final attainment, and comments as follows: “The three stages of nonconceptualization [of non-Buddhists, of Hinayanists and of Mahayanists] are those that cause liberation [from cyclic existence]. The final conclusion of them all is this vehicle of spontaneous perfection” (LEC, f. 247a5-6).

111 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this paragraph while discussing the view of self-originated wisdom (LEC, f. 164a3-4).

112 Here, the text gives the semantic meaning of the Tibetan term mandala, *dkyil ’khor,* where *dkyil* is center and *’khor* is circle.

113 Tib. *yi ge ’khor lo’i tshogs chen*. See above, n. 89.

114 This sentence is quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe while discussing the view of the total self. Introducing this view, he states: “All phenomena consisting of I and other, ego and all that appears as ego, without being transformed or altered, are from the beginning naturally clear as the nature of the wisdom of pure awareness that does not dwell [on anything]; it is not even grasped through the expression total self; in fact, from the beginning it is beyond designations expressed by words and letters” (LEC, f. 163b6-164a3). And: “This total self that is self-originated wisdom, without abandoning or creating causes and conditions, manifests naturally in anything and yet has no abode [whatsoever]” (LEC, f. 170a5-6).

115 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this sentence to substantiate the explanation that obscurations due to past actions are already purified and the accumulation of merit and wisdom is already completed:

> Since the obscurations are self-originated wisdom, they are not to be purified; that is, the original state that is pure in its own condition and has always been enlightenment, is beyond all limitations; therefore, one unerringly understands and is familiar with the principle that there are no accumulations to be gathered, for the obscurations are naturally purified without being eliminated and the accumulations are already complete without being gathered. Moreover, the same text [the *Mejung*] states: *The primordial state is like a razor, like a sword tempered in sesame oil.* And: *In fact, through [the power] of this marvelous primordial state, the* vajra *of meditation can pulverize even those two hundred seventy Mount Merus.* And, *[Like] a great thunderbolt of meteoric iron that [instantly destroys] a thousand mountains, [the primordial state] can destroy, from the top down, a snow mountain of mistakes, which melts and collects in an ocean of nectar. . . like a wish-fulfilling precious gem, the Body dimension that is*

self-perfected without [one] having to wish it so. . . . [Accordingly,] the obscurations are naturally purified and the accumulations are already complete; therefore, the original state [of enlightenment] is already naturally actualized. (EIM, p.13)

116 Quoting this entire paragraph while discussing the final attainment, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says:

> Therefore, in the specific context [of Atiyoga], since there is no attachment to anything, past actions, their maturation, the obscuration of birth and of existence, are purified from the beginning. Being unrelated to the grasping to ego and to the three times, emotions are by their very nature without birth; [thus] the obscurations of the emotions are purified [from the beginning]. Pervading [all] from the beginning, [the total self] is without duality and is the natural condition; therefore, there is not even a grasping to reality. The obscurations of the knowable are purified, since [the total self] is free of them from the beginning. Nonetheless, since the primordial purity is a purity that does not require the effort [of applying] the antidote, when one discovers the principle that is already complete without being discovered [by the mind], the expression "purifying the obscurations" is used just as a convention. It has already been explained that such [purity] is unrelated to the accumulation [of merit and wisdom]. (LEC, f. 246a4-b2)

Quoting from the words *Like a lotus. . .* until *. . . unsurpassable final attainment*, while discussing the conduct of the meditator, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> There is no acceptance or rejection whatsoever with regard to effort, and so forth, because all is the total self; thus, everything is the perfect conduct in which the action and the one who acts are indivisible. Therefore, there is nothing [to do] intentionally with body and voice, and one is not conditioned by whatever one does. The same text [the *Mejung*] says: *Like a lotus, it is unstained by [the mud of] defects; it is like the fire [at the end] of the kalpa: regardless of the suffering [experienced] and the evil action committed, one will accomplish the unsurpassable final attainment of liberation.* [The *Mejung*] moreover [states]: *All is the great manifestation of energy, the method, that is perfected in one's self.* Thus, one remains in the natural condition without any activity whatsoever. (EIM, p. 11)

Regarding the phrase *All is the great manifestation, the method, that is complete in one's self,* Chögyal Namkhai Norbu says: "All manifestations are related to *rolpa* energy and are self-perfected in our own primordial condition; thus, since everything is oneself, there is really nothing to accept or reject" (CNN, OC).

117 This paragraph is quoted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe to substantiate his explanation that obscurations are already purified and the accumulations are

already complete (EIM, p.11). See also above, nn. 116, 117.

118 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes these two lines while discussing the view of the total sphere:

> Some hold the view of the unique, total sphere. Of what does such a system consist? If [on the one hand] mental fabrication is the condition of all phenomena insofar as they appear differently to those with misconceptions and those who follow spiritual paths and levels, [on the other hand], the primordial state, the pure awareness, is the state of buddha in the condition of the great sphere that is by its own very nature free of any mental fabrication. In this [condition], all phenomena of the dualistic mental fabrication, without having been abandoned, are not perceived [by the mind]. Thus, just as a designation, since it is incomparable, [such a sphere] is called "unique." Moreover, in order to counteract dualistic grasping, [it is taught that] the originary reality is free of excess or defects [of evaluation]. If such a principle has to be understood through one's own pure awareness, it should not be considered something different [from one's self]. It is the very nature of the self. There is no essence that appears as the self and is definable: it is nothing [definable as] I or other; [and] is not something to be sought. Thus, one should observe it directly without analyzing it. What is direct observation? [That in which] there is no motion of thought. In this way one discovers by oneself the experience of the total sphere. (LEC, f. 187a3-b4)

Concluding his discussion of the principle of the great sphere, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says: "There are many [textual] arguments such as those cited, through which one definitively ascertains what is and what is not the principle [of the great sphere]: in this principle, there is no abandonment of anything; in fact, not existing [as a definable thing], the single [sphere is] unrelated to anything [yet] has not abandoned anything" (LEC, f.189a4-5).

119 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes all but one of the above thirteen lines of our text while discussing the view of nonduality. See also above, n. 11, and below, n. 146.

Quoting the last two sentences of this chapter, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> For this reason, there is no intentional action done for the purpose of not settling [the mind], of not thinking, or of not [having] a point of reference [by] abandoning the settling of the mind, thinking, and points of reference. Why is that? Because when the settling [of the mind], the thinking, and the points of reference [of meditation] are understood as uninterrupted self-originated wisdom itself, there is no rejection or acceptance [in the sense of] meditating on something to be rejected or something to be accepted. (EIM, p.7)

120 See above, nn. 115 and 116.

121 Union (Tib. *sbyor ba*) and liberation (*grol ba*) are the two tantric practices of sexual union and ritual killing, respectively. Here, however, their meaning is explained in the light of the principles of the Dzogchen teaching. See introduction, p. 57.

122 Knowledge (Tib. *shes rab*; Skt. *prajna)*, as stressed in the Mahayana sutras, is the most important of the ten means of transcendence (*phar phyin bcu*): generosity (*sbyin pa*), ethics (*thsul khrims*), patience (*bzod pa*), diligence (*brtson 'grus*), concentration (*bsam gtan*), knowledge (*shes rab)*, method (*thabs*), strength (*stobs*), aspiration (*smon pa*), and wisdom (*ye shes*).

123 Commenting on the above two sentences while discussing liberation without effort, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states: "Thus, it is [a training] that is naturally unrelated to any action aimed at examination and analysis. The meaning thus presented implies that the meeting with the correct perfect principle has already taken place [from the beginning]: this is the supreme method" (LEC, f. 249b3-4).

Quoting these two lines while discussing the view, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

> When explaining that contemplation is beyond training, [if one applies] concepts and practice to the view,there arises the concept of [the view as] definitely established, that is, one does not see that it is not to be applied [with the mind]. Therefore [the citation] explains that the training is beyond concepts and application. Thus, [it] teaches [such an] understanding as the special greatness of the supreme training. . . . [Such citations] teach that the view of the Omniscient One is not an object of practice; thus, it is beyond objectives. (EIM, p.3)

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments: "Here, there is nothing that needs to be learned in a merely intellectual way, because when one becomes intellectually oriented, this prevents one from discovering the real nature. Because of this, the Dzogchen tantras say that it could be easier for an uneducated shepherd to follow the Dzogchen teaching than for a learned scholar. In fact, the scholar's learning creates many limitations to self-discovery. All one's learning and training are not the real learning and training, but when there is nothing to train in, this is the supreme training" (CNN, OC).

124 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, quoting this line to support his explanation of the contemplation without any point of reference, states:

> Just conventionally, regarding the settling of the mind in meditation, one should recognize the erroneous way of settling the mind. This is as follows: those who do not understand the principle of the primordial state, [although] they say that the total self is not the object of experience [of the mind], they focus on the true

nature of reality [as if it were somewhere] outside. They follow [this practice], searching for a place to settle the mind by withdrawing the focus inward, hoping for the view to become manifest, and fearing to deviate [from it], [trying in this way] to make the practice work with the wish to eventually attain realization. [Although they] say that there is no point of reference, they focus on the lack of point of reference; [although] they say that there is nothing to refute and nothing to establish, they [try to] abandon lethargy and fogginess, thoughts, and concepts. Holding a view connected to hope and fear is a deviation. Through such [an approach] they do not meet the true principle. Thus, the same text states: *Those who desire enlightenment have no enlightenment, and are far from the supreme enlightenment, like the earth and sky [are far from one another]*. (EIM, pp. 5-6)

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu comments: "Those who desire to become totally realized will not obtain what they wish for. They are far from realization, as earth and sky are far apart from each other. This means that one must not remain in any kind of concept, even the concept of becoming realized" (CNN, OC).

125 Garab Dorje in his commentary on the *Manjushrinamasamgiti* explains:

He has attained the ten perfections does not [refer] to the means of transcendence accompanied by effort. Well then, which are they? They are those that are attained and exist because they do not abide in the phenomena of the three worlds, have no gateway to it, are inexpressible, beyond comparison, and unmoving; they are great knowledge, do not involve activity or effort, can manifest instantly, [are attained and are present because] all qualities are perfected in one's self and because, from the beginning, the nature of the great wisdom is without either union or separation. (f. 44b4-5)

See also above, n. 122.

126 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this paragraph while discussing the conduct of the great method (LEC, f. 229b3-4). See introduction, p. 58. However, he also quotes the last line of the paragraph in his EIM (p. 3) in the context of the explanation of the view beyond objectives.

127 Tib. *yi dam lha:* various deities of the tantric pantheon that are the dimension of perfect resources and the focus of tantric practice.

128 After quoting the last four lines of the *Mejung*, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe states:

This passage teaches that there is no birth and no death, and yet they do exist; they exist and they do not exist. There is no going and no coming, yet they do exist; they exist and do not exist. There is no abiding and there is [abiding]; there is and there is not. There is no cyclic existence and [no] transcendence of

suffering and, at the same time, they exist; they exist and do not exist. We are not free from an object and, at the same time, we are; we are free and we are not free. All phenomena are empty, and yet they do exist; they exist and are empty. Therefore, since there are no ascertainable characteristics, one can have different thoughts but nothing will be born [with such characteristics]. (LEC, ff.194b4-195a1)

129 Tib. *stong spyi phud*. A world system centered around Mount Meru and endowed with four continents, multiplied a thousand times. See above, n. 7.

130 Twenty-five commitments (Tib. *dam tshig nyi shu rtsa lnga*): may possibly refer to the twenty-five auxiliary commitments that are the base for tantric practice in the Mahayoga and Anuyoga. They are: five to practice, five not to renounce, five to accept, five to recognize, and five to integrate. For a detailed explanation, see Kongtrul's *Buddhist Ethics*, pp. 281-285.

131 See above, nn. 115, 116.

132 Before quoting the second sentence of this paragraph while discussing the final attainment, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe says: "Hence, this means that this path [is not a way] to tread; it is the very pure awareness of the principle [of the primordial state]" (LEC, f.245b4).

Nubchen Sangye Yeshe also quotes this sentence of the *Mejung* to substantiate his explanation that obscurations are already purified and the accumulations already completed, in the context of the contemplation without any point of reference (EIM, p.13). See above, nn. 115, 116.

133 For the meaning of this sentence according to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, see above, n. 17.

134 Sky (Tib. *nam mkha'*) is a simile for the true nature of reality, the very nature of Body, Speech, and Mind that, like the sky, is measureless and inconceivable, as opposed to the measurable and conceivable Body of earth or the material dimension. Lines closely resembling these of the *Mejung* are found in the fifth chapter of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. In his commentary to the *Guhyasamaja*, Gyalwe Chin quotes the lines as follows: *nam mkha'i lus las yang dag byung//nam mkha'i gsung ni rab ston pa// nam mkha'i lta bu'i thugs te chos gi mchog*, and explains them as follows: "[It states,] *Perfectly arisen from the Body of the sky*, because through the door of the Body, the essence [the true nature of reality] designated as sky, emanates as everything. [It states,] *The Voice of the sky perfectly reveals*. . . because [the Voice] illuminates the meaning of non-grasping. [It states,] *The Mind is like the sky, the supreme reality* because [the Mind], of the same flavor as

nonconceptuality, is at all times free of grasping" (Toh.1847, vol. Nyi, f.187a5-b4).

135 Tib. *sa*, literally, earth. The text only explicitly explains the meaning of Body of the earth (*sa'i sku*).

136 Tib. *sum cu phrag drug* (literally, six times thirty): amended as *sum cu phrag dgu* (literally, nine times thirty), to coincide with the earlier mention.

137 The preceding section with this last concluding remark may mean that the mistakes and violations do not stem from the manifestation of the universe and living beings. In fact, these manifestations are the material Body of the primordial state. Mistakes and violations stem from the fact that recognition of the primordial state has not yet occurred. How, then, does one amend mistakes and violations? By understanding that the manifestations of the universe and of living beings are the very Body of the primordial state.

138 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, quoting the words *Attachment blazes as light* while describing the perfect degree of meditative experience, says:

> Even if the consciousness is intentionally directed at the object, it does not get involved with it, and even during dreaming, fainting, and so on. . . the pure awareness remains naturally in its vast expanse: this is mastery. In this meditation, lethargy, agitation, emotions, thoughts, and obscurations that are [usually] called impediments, in the same text [the *Mejung*, are described as follows]: *Attachment blazes as light*. These and the following words [of that text] teach that [when governed by knowledge,] the five poisons are self-originated wisdom. All phenomena are indivisible; therefore, they are the nondual purity. (EIM, pp. 10-11)

139 The five external objects include visual form, and so on.

140 Alakavati (Tib. *lcang lo can*) in this context refers to the dimension of enlightenment.

141 "The *nondual union of the male and female bodhisattva* (Tib. *byang chub sems dpa' dang sems ma gnyis su med pa'i sbyor ba*), which in Tantra refers to the union of male and female deities symbolizing method and knowledge, respectively, here stands for the union of primordial emptiness (*ka dag*) and self-perfection (*lhun grub*) as the two indivisible aspects of the original condition of the individual" (CNN, OC).

142 Here ignorance (Tib. *gti mug*) is the lack of recognition of the true nature of reality and the basis for the dualistic appearance of the phenomena of cyclic existence.

143 Earth (Tib. *sa*) is Buddhalocana (*Sangs rgyas spyan ma*), consort of

Ratnasambhava; water (*chu*) is Mamaki, consort of Akshobhya; air (*rlung*) is Tara (*sGrol ma*), consort of Amogasiddhi; fire (*me*) is Pandaravasini (*Gos dkar mo*), consort of Amitabha; and space (*nam mkha'*), in whose nature all elements abide, indicates Dhatvishvari (*dByings phyug ma*), consort of Vairocana. The text implies that earth is the Jewel family, water the Indestructible family, air the Action family, fire the Lotus family, and space the Tathagata family. See introduction, p. 53.

144 The Sanskrit term *heruka*, sometimes translated into Tibetan as *khrag 'thung* (blood drinker), is a generic name for the principal male figures of the mandala as well as for the wrathful deities. It does not refer exclusively to tantric deities in a wrathful mood but also to those in a joyful or peaceful mood. Atisha explains the four syllables of *shri heruka* in this way: the syllable *shri* signifiies nondual wisdom and indicates that beings' mindstreams are indivisible from wisdom. The syllable *he* signifies the dispelling of the confusion concerning birth from no cause, and so on. It indicates that everything arises within emptiness. The syllable *ru* signifies the overcoming of death through the knowledge of the ultimate meaning that cannot be analyzed or examined. The syllable *ka* signifies that there is no inherent reality, material or immaterial, to either cyclic life or its transcendence. That being said, the meaning indicated by the four syllables is the ultimate heruka. See Atisha's *Vajra Song of the Vajra Seat* (Toh. 1494, vol. Zha, ff. 209a5-7). Accordingly, here, with the image of the chief deity of the mandala, the ultimate heruka is indicated.

145 Tib. *dur khrod brgyad*. An element of the tantric mandalas, the eight charnel grounds (sometimes visualized between the mandala palace and the vajra barrier and sometimes beyond the flames surrounding the vajra barrier) symbolize the purity of the eight consciousnesses. They also represent the purity of the similes for unreality: reflection in a mirror, dream, magical creation, optical illusion, city of *gandharvas*, echo, reflection on water, and space. Each charnel ground is characterized by various elements, such as a particular tree, a local guardian standing on the tree, a guardian of a particular direction, a naga, a cloud, a mountain, or a stupa. One imagines them populated by all kinds of birds, wild animals, fearsome apparitions, skeletons, and corpses, with temples, monasteries, hermitages, and ponds. All sorts of beings wander through them, including humans and nonhumans, yogins and yoginis displaying different moods, some dancing, some singing, some drinking, and so on.

146 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes this paragraph while discussing the view of nonduality. He introduces the topic in the following way: “Since Atiyoga is great, it has the view of nonduality. The principle of the total bliss unrelated to effort, the primordial state that is present from the beginning, is the nonduality of all that is known as a limited point of view”(LEC, ff. 180b5-181a1). He concludes: “Thus, in relation to that which must be known by oneself, one does not act even in order to manifest one’s own knowledge of this principle; [in fact,] if [phenomena] are not conceptualized, altered, differentiated, or examined, this understanding appears naturally”(LEC, f.186a6-b1).

Nubchen Sangye Yeshe also quotes the last two sentences of this paragraph while discussing the result that is not to be attained:

If one should ask, “How is the so-called attainment to be understood?” That which is not to be attained is indicated as “attainment” in the following manner: because the essence of the primordial state is undefined, it can appear as attainment; thus, [when] the same text [the *Mejung*] states: *Since I am awakened from the beginning, I can become anything*,[this means that] just as reflections of the sun, moon, and stars appear in [muddy] water once it has become clear, the principle of primordial enlightenment becomes manifest in pure awareness. If one should ask, “Well then, is there any effort, any gateway, or any interior [in relation to attainment]?” The same text [the *Mejung*] states: *[My pure realm] cannot be left, cannot be entered, has no objects, and is devoid of sense organs. With no outer and inner, gateway or interior, it is the great vastness of the inner reality*. And further: *Don’t search for the total self elsewhere, [for] the natural condition is clear without being conceptualized and moreover, since it is self-perfected, it is complete without the need to do anything.* [Thus, the term] attainment is only [used] for [the benefit of] those of inferior [capacities]. (EIM, pp. 13-14)

147 King of Nonconceptuality (Tib. *mi dmigs pa’i rgyal po*): a metaphor for the primordial state.

148 The order of the following subdivisions of these themes reflects the order of the original Tibetan, which does not follow the sequence in which the themes have just been listed in the text.

149 Most of the themes of these subdivisions form the topics of the various chapters of this text.

150 In this section, the text seems to present a progression in which the consideration of the goal (the primordial state) changes according to the

spirtual way one follows. Thus, what seems the be final, for example, in the creation phase of Mahayoga (as point 8.1 implies) is not so at the phase of completion (as point 8.2 implies), and so forth, until the consideration implied in point 8.5 where a final primordial state is implicitly negated.

151 The Sanskrit word *narahasa* may mean either human laughter if taken as a determinative (*tatpurusha*) compound, or joker if taken as an exocentric (*bahuvṛhi*) compound. In the context of the *Mejung* where bodhicitta has a different meaning than in tantras such as the *Guhyasamaja*, the expression may be taken to mean the total realization of the primordial state. In the context of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, the word *narahasa* relates to the secret empowerment (Tib. *gsang dbang*). Nagarjuna's *Tantric Commentary on the Glorious Guhyasamaja Tantra* (*dPal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyud 'grel*) helps us to understand the implications of each syllable:

> *gsang ba'i dbang thob pa'i rnal 'byor pas/ sngags thams cad 'grub par 'gyur te/ rnam par rtog pa med pa'i phyir ro/ gsang ba ni sba bar bya'o/ yang na ra rdo rje rtse mo dang 'dra ba yin pa'i phyir dang/ ha ni bya'i gdong dang 'dra ba'i phyir dang/ ha rdo rje dang pad ma'o/ sa ni 'dzag pa'o/ ra dang ha las 'dzag pas na ra ha sa ni gsang ste/ rdo rje dang pad ma las byung ba'i byang chub kyi sems kyi ngo bo'o//* (D 1784, f. 125a)
>
> Since he does not have concepts, the yogin who has received the secret empowerment will accomplish all mantras. [The secret empowerment is called] secret [because] it is [to be] kept secret. Moreover, [one speaks of it as] *na ra* because it resembles a vajra pinnacle; [as] *ha* because it resembles the face of a bird and [because it indicates] the vajra and the lotus; and [as] *sa* [which signifies] to trickle. Since it trickles down from *ra* and *ha*, *narahasa* is secret; it is the essence of the bodhicitta (generative fluids) that trickle from the vajra and the lotus. (Researched by Gyurme Dorje.)

152 These are three themes from chapter 33 of our text.

153 This is a theme of chapter 34 of our text.

154 The ten fields (Tib. *zhing bcu*) usually refers to ten persons who fulfill the ten conditions for the rite of liberation (*sgrol ba*). In his *Commentary on the Three Vows*, DharmaShri enumerates the fields as follows:

> . . . an enemy of the Three Jewels who causes great harm to the Teachings; in particular, an enemy of a qualified spiritual master; practitioners who let their pledges deteriorate and do not restore them; those who reject the way of Secret Mantra after having entered it; those who despise the master or vajra siblings; those who though unauthorized, participate in tantric activities with the intent to steal; those who have harmed sentient beings; those who are fierce enemies of practitioners who honor their pledges; those who engage exclusively and

continuously in evil actions; and those beings whose evil actions would lead to rebirth in the three lower forms of life or who are currently experiencing the result of these actions in the lower forms of life. (*Commentary on the Three Vows*, ff. 261-262)

155 This is a theme of chapter 34 of our text.

156 This is the theme of chapter 34 of our text.

157 This is the theme of chapter 32 of our text.

158 That is, having understood that the primordial state is beyond birth and death.

159 This paragraph may mean that when one is not bound by the illusion created by personal habitual tendencies, one recognizes the primordial state as an all-encompassing sphere, and not a personal entity subject to permanence or cessation.

160 The following explanation of the semantics of the term primordial state (Tib. *byang chub sems*; Skt. *bodhicitta*) includes the explanation of total bliss (Tib. *bde ba chen po*; Skt. *mahasukha*), an expression that is affixed to the title of this text in some of its Tibetan editions.

161 A Sanskrit term, literally meaning vagina, *bhaga* is often used to refer to the expanse of the true nature of reality.

162 Nubchen Sangye Yeshe quotes the above two paragraphs while discussing the self-originated wisdom (Tib. *rang byung gi ye shes su lta ba*). To highlight their essential meaning, he states: “In the essence of the self-originated wisdom, by nature free of causes and conditions, all the phenomena that are subject to birth and cessation are from the beginning the state of buddha; thus, as they are great wisdom, they are by nature limpid, resembling celestial light with no external or internal [aspects]” (LEC, f. 172b3-5).

Moreover, he states: “When the knowledge of this principle is certain, that which appears as a bad field of activity is the buddha’s level; such is the great quality of the realization” (LEC, f. 174a4-5).

163 mTshams brag edition of the *rNying ma’i rgyud ’bum*, vol. Kha, ff. 348.a6-388.b1.

164 mTshams brag edition of the *rNying ma’i rgyud ’bum*, ff. 388.b1-429.b1.

165 Tib. *Ye she snying po*: possibly, the Indian master who was the master of shantarakshita.

166 mTshams brag edition of the *rNying ma’i rgyud ’bum*, ff. 285.a4-311a2.

167 mTshams brag edition of the *rNying ma’i rgyud ’bum*, ff. 328.b5-347b7.

168 *Bai ro'i rgyud 'bum*, vol. 2 ff. 1-34.

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Shes bya mdzod/Shes bya kun khyab/Theg pa'i sgo kun las btus pa gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod bslab pa gsum legs par ston pa'i bstan bcos shes bya kun khyab
(The brief titles refer to both the root text and its commentary, the

Shes bya mtha’ yas pa’i rgya mtsho)
Beijing: Bod mi rigs dpe bskrun khang, 1982
(See translations listed below under Other Sources)

Longchenpa (kLong chen rab ’byams pa)
Chos dbyings rin po che’i mdzod kyi ’grel pa lung gi gter mdzod
In mDzod bdun.
Gangtok: Do Drup Chen Rinpoche Publications

_____ *Sems nyid ngal so’i ’grel pa shing rta chen po*
In Ngal so skor gsum, vol. Kha (ff.170-72)
Gangtok: Do Drup Chen Rinpoche Publications

Nubchen Sangye Yeshe (Nubs chen sangs rgyas ye shes)
Light for the Eyes of Contemplation (LEC)
bSam gtan mig sgron/sGom gyi gnad gsal bar phye ba bsam gtan mig sgron
Leh,1974

_____(attributed)
Experiential Instructions on the Marvelous Primordial State (EIM)
Byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba’i nyams khrid
Extract from *The Heart Sun: Mind Essence of All Scholars and Siddhas* (Phan grub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma)
Bai ro rgyud ’bum, vol. 1

Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa (dPa’ bo gtsug la phreng ba)
History of the Teaching: Feast of the Wise
Chos ’byung mkhas pa’i dga’ ston/dam pa’i chos kyi ’khor lo bsgyur ba rnams

kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa’i dga’ ston
Beijing, 1986

Taranatha (Ta ra na tha kun dga’ snying po)
History of Buddhism in India
Dam pa’i chos rin po che ’phags pa’i yul du ji ltar dar ba’i tshul gsal bar ston ba bgos ’dod kun ’byung
Translated by Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya; Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, ed.
Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1970

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bKa’ babs bdun ldan/bKa’ babs bdun ldan gyi brgyud pa’i rnam thar ngo mtshar rmad du byung ba rin po che’i khungs lta bu’i gtam
rJe btsun Tara na tha’i gsung ’bum, vol. 17
Dzamthang edition;

Translated by David Templeman as, *Taranatha bka’ babs bdun ldan: The Seven Instruction Lineages*
Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1983

Yudra Nyingpo (g.Yu sgra snying po)
Biography of Vairocana
Bai ro ’dra ’bag/rJe btsun thams cad mkhyen pa bai ro tsa na’i rnam thar ’dra ’bag chen mo

Several editions exist: the Lhasa xylographic edition; the edition contained in *Bai ro rgyud ’bum,* vol. Ja (ff. 404-406)
Leh, 1971

Yungtön Dorje Pal (g.Yung ston rdo rje dpal)

Eighteen Empowerments of the Energy of Pure Awareness
Sems sde ma bu bco brgyad kyi dgongs pa ngo sprod pa'i thabs rig pa rtsal dbang bco brgyad
sNga 'gyur bka' ma, vol. Tsa (pp. 533-623)
Sichuan: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrung khang edition;
Derge edition, vol. Ka

Treasure Doctrines

Nyangral Nyima Özer (Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer)
Zangs gling ma/sLob dpon pad ma'i rnam thar zangs gling ma
Sichuan: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrung khang, 1987
Translated by Erik Pema Kunsang as *The Lotus-Born: The Life Story of Padmasambhava*
Boston: Shambhala, 1993

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The Pandita and the Siddha: Tibetan Studies in Honour of E. Gene Smith, pp. 171- 78. New Delhi: Amnye Machen, 2007.

Key Terms
in Tibetan and Sanskrit

a thousand world systems	*stong spyi phud*
abandonment	*spong ba*
Abundant Delight	*dga' ldan rtseg pa*
acceptance	*len pa*
accomplishment, means of (Skt. *sādhana*)	*sgrub thabs*
accumulation	*tshogs*
accumulation of merit, gathering of	*bsod nams kyi tshogs sog pa*
accumulation of wisdom, gathering of	*ye shes kyi tshogs sog pa*
Action family	*las kyi rigs*
actions (Skt. *karma*)	*las/las byed pa*
active consciousnesses	*byed pa'i rnam par shes pa*
activity	*mdzad pa*
actual realization	*mngon rtogs*
agate	*mchong*
aggregate	*phung po*
Akaniṣṭa	*'og min*
Alakāvatī	*lcang lo can*
All-Creating King	*kun byed rgyal po*
All-Encompassing Perfection	*rdzogs pa spyi chings*
all-expansive wisdom	*ye shes kun tu spros pa*
all-inclusive sphere	*kun tu bsdus pa'i thig le*
All-Knowing (Skt. *sarvavid*)	*kun rig*
All-Knowing Dharma Lord	*kun rig chos kyi rje*
All-Penetrating Perfection	*rdzogs pa spyi gcod*
all-pervasive	*phyal ba*
already completed	*byas zin pa*
amend	*bskang ba*
Amitābha	*'od dpag med*
Amoghasiddhi	*don yod grub pa*

anger	*zhe sdang*
antidote	*gnyen po*
Anuyoga	*rjes su rnal ’byor*
Aro system	*a ro’i lugs*
Aro Yeshe Jungne	*a ro ye shes ’byung gnas*
arrogant	*pho dregs*
Ārya tradition	*’phags lugs*
ascertain	*sha ’thangs phye*
asura	*lha ma yin*
Atiyoga	*a ti yo ga shin tu rnal ’byor*
attachment	*’dod chags*
attainment (Skt. *siddhi*)	*dngos grub*
awakened eye	*rgyas pa’i spyan*
base	*gzhi*
base as it is	*gzhi ji bzhin ba*
behavior/conduct	*spyod pa*
beyond concepts	*rnam par mi rtog*
beyond divisions	*phyogs med*
beyond enumeration	*grangs las ’das pa*
beyond example	*dpe las ’das pa*
beyond mental fabrication	*spros pa med pa*
beyond searching	*rtsol ba med pa*
beyond seeking	*btsal du med pa*
beyond union and separation	*’du ’bral med pa*
beyond words	*tshig las das pa*
bhaga of Samantabhadrī	*kun tu bzang mo’i bhaga*
Bhagavān/Victorious One	*bcom ldan ’das*
Bhikṣunī Anandā	*dge slong ma kun dga’ mo*
Bhuta	*’byung po*
biased	*rang phyogs can*
blaze as light	*’od du ’bar*
bliss/happiness	*bde ba*
blood-drinker	*khrag ’thung*

Blue Annals, The	*deb ther sngon po*
bodhicitta/primordial state	*byang chub sems*
bodhisattva	*byang chub sems dpa'*
Body dimensions of the five families	*rigs lnga'i sku*
Body of the earth/material dimension	*sa'i sku*
Body of the sky	*nam mkha'i sku*
Body of wisdom	*ye shes kyi sku*
Body, Voice, and Mind of the earth	*sa'i sku gsung thugs*
Body/Body dimension/dimension (Skt. *kāya*)	*sku*
Buddha	*sangs rgyas*
buddhafield	*sangs rgyas kyi zhing*
Buddhaguhya	*sangs rgyas gsang ba*
Buddhagupta	*sangs rgyas sbas pa*
Buddhajñānapāda	*sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs*
cannot be cut	*mi chod pa*
cannot be meditated upon	*bsgom du med*
cannot be modified	*bcos su med*
cannot be thought of as an object	*dmigs su med*
chakra of inexhaustible ornaments	*mi zad pa rgyan gyi 'khor lo*
changeless path	*mi 'pho ba'i lam*
characteristics	*mtshan nyid*
characteristics of the mental consciousness	*yid kyi mtshan nyid*
charnel ground	*dur khrod*
Che Trashi	*lce bkra shis*
Chogro Lui Gyaltsen	*cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan*
clarity	*gsal ba*
cliff at Zong cave	*gzong phug mo'i brag*
Collected Tantras of the Old Tradition	*rnying ma rgyud 'bum*
Collected Tantras of Vairocana	*bai ro rgyud 'bum*
Commentary on the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti (Garab Dorje's)	*'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i 'grel pa don gsal bar byed pa*
Commentary on the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti (Mañjuśrīmitra's)	*'jam dpal msthan yang dag par brjod pa'i 'grel pa*
Commentary on the Three Vows	*sdom gsum 'grel pa*

commitment being (Skt. *samayasattva*)	*dam tshig sems dpa’*
commitment of Atiyoga	*a ti yo ga’i dam tshig*
commitments	*dam tshig*
commitments in which there is nothing to observe	*srung ba med pa’i dam tshig*
commitments to be observed	*srung ba’i dam tshig*
compassion	*snying rje*
compassionate energy/energy	*thugs rje*
concept	*rtog pa*
conceptual characteristic	*mtshan ma*
condition of emptiness	*stong pa’i chos*
conduct of spontaneous perfection	*lhun grub kyi spyod pa*
conduct that is always good	*kun tu bzang po’i spyod pa*
conduct/behavior	*spyod pa*
consciousness	*rnam par shes pa*
consciousness basis of all (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*)	*kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*
constituents of experience	*skye mched*
contemplation	*ting ’dzin, ting nge ’dzin*
contemplation abiding on the tenth level	*sa bcu la gnas pa zhe sbya ba ting nge ’dzin*
contemplation of coarse [aspects]	*rags pa’i ting nge ’dzin*
contemplation of the deity	*lha’i ting nge ’dzin*
content that is communicated	*brjod par bya ba*
creator	*byed pa po*
crucial teaching	*lung*
cyclic existence/samsara	*’khor ba*
ḍākinī	*mkha’ ’gro*
Dampa Desheg of Kathog	*kaḥ thog dam pa bde gshegs*
dang, *dang* energy (empty form energy)	*gdangs*
definitive crucial teaching	*lung nges pa*
definitive meaning	*nges pa’i don*
definitive secret instruction	*nges pa’i gsang ba’i man ngag*
definitive words	*nges pa’i tshig*
deity	*lha*
deity of mantra	*sngags kyi lha*

deity of the mind	*yid kyi lha*
delight of the supreme secret	*gsang ba mchog gi dgyes pa*
Derge	*sde dge*
deva	*lha*
Devarāja	*lha'i rgyal po*
devoid of identity	*bdag med*
Dharma	*chos*
dharmakāya	*chos sku*
dharmamudrā	*chos kyi phyag rgya*
Dharmaśrī	*dhar ma shri*
Dilgo Khyentse	*dil mgo mkhyen brtse*
dimension of emanation (Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*)	*sprul sku*
dimension of perfect resources (Skt. *sambhogakāya*)	*longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku*
dimension of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*)	*chos sku*
dimension of sameness	*mnyam pa nyid kyi sku*
dimension of the essence of enlightenment	*snying po byang chub sku*
dimension, pure/Body dimension, pure	*sku rnam par dag pa*
Dimension/Body/Body dimension (Skt. *kāya*)	*sku*
dimensions	*thal ba*
direct crossing	*thod rgal*
directly experience	*thog tu 'bebs*
discerning wisdom	*so sor rtogs pa'i ye shes*
disciple/receptacle	*snod*
Dogtön Öbar	*ldog ston 'od 'bar*
domain	*yul*
domain of the commitments	*dam tshig gi yul*
Dorje Legpa	*rdo rje legs pa*
Dorje Lingpa	*rdo rje gling pa*
Drogmi Palkyi Yeshe	*'brog mi dpal kyi ye shes*
duality, dualism	*gnyis snang*
Dzogchen	*rdzogs chen*
Dzogchen tantra	*rdzogs chen gyi rgyud*
eight branches of the exalted ones	*'phags pa'i yan lag brgyad*

perfect view	*yang dag pa'i lta ba*
perfect perception	*yang dag pa'i rtog pa*
perfect speech	*yang dag pa'i ngag*
perfect action	*yang dag pa'i las kyi mtha'*
perfect livelihood	*yang dag pa'i 'tsho ba*
perfect effort	*yang dag pa'i rtsol ba*
perfect presence	*yang dag pa'i dran pa*
perfect meditative stability	*yang dag pa'i ting nge 'dzin*
eight classes of consciousness	*rnam shes tshogs brgyad*
consciousness basis of all (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*)	*kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*
mental consciousness	*yid*
afflicted consciousness	*nyon yid*
five sense consciousnesses	*sgo lnga'i dbang shes*
eight classes of gods and demons	*lha srin sde brgyad*
eight commitments of the marvelous primordial state	*byang chub sems rmad du byung ba'i dam tshig brgyad*
primordially unborn	*ye nas ma skyed pa*
primordially nonarisen	*ye nas ma byung ba*
primordially nonabiding	*ye nas mi gnas pa*
primordially empty	*ye nas stong pa*
primordially nonexistent	*ye nas med pa*
all-pervasive, all pervading	*kun la khyab pa*
single	*gcig pu*
self-perfected	*lhun grub*
eight offering goddesses	*mchod pa'i lha mo brgyad*
eight similes for unreality	*sgyu ma dpe brgyad*
reflections in a mirror	*me long nang gi gzugs brnyan*
dream	*rmi lam*
magical creation	*sgyu ma*
optical illusion	*smig rgyu*
city of *gandharvas*	*dri za'i grong khyer*
echo	*brag cha*
reflections in water	*chu nang gi gzugs brnyan*
space	*nam mkha'*

eight substances for [implementing] the *siddhis*	*dngos grub kyi rdzas brgyad*
Eighteen Empowerments of the Energy of Pure Awareness	*rig pa'i rtsal dbang bco brgyad*
Eighteen Major Crucial Teachings	*lung chen bco brgyad*
Ekajaṭī	*rdo rje spyan gcig ma*
element	*'byung ba*
eloquence (Skt. *subhāṣa*)	*legs bshad*
emotion	*nyon mongs*
emptiness	*stong pa nyid*
energy of wisdom	*ye shes kyi thugs rje*
energy/compassionate energy	*thugs rje*
energy-winds	*rlung*
enjoyment/richness/wealth/resources	*longs spyod*
enlightened activity/activity	*'phrin las*
Enlightened One/Buddha	*sangs rgyas*
enlightenment (Skt. *bodhi*)	*byang chub/sangs rgyas pa*
entrance/gateway	*'jug pa*
eon	*bskal pa*
equanimity	*btang snyoms*
essence	*bcud/ngo bo/snying po*
essence of enlightenment	*byang chub snying po*
essence/heart	*snying po*
Essential Meaning of the Marvelous Great Perfection: The Golden Vine, [*Extract*] *from the Tantra Called the Wheel of Self-Originating Bliss*	*rdzogs pa chen po rmad byung don gyi snying po rang byung bde ba'i 'khor lo'i rgyud las gser kyi khril shing can*
eternal and immutable	*rtag pa g.yung drung*
everlasting Body of great eternity	*rtag pa chen po g.yung drung gi sku*
existence	*srid pa*
expanse of the true nature of reality (Skt. *dharmadhātu*)	*chos dbyings*
expression	*thams cad du spros pa*
feeling	*tshor ba*
fettered by miserliness	*ser snas bcings*
field of experience	*spyod yul*
final	*mthar thug*

final attainment/result	*'bras bu*
five Bodies/dimensions	*sku lnga*
five doors	*sgo lnga*
five emotions	*nyon mongs lnga*
attachment	*'dod chags*
anger	*zhe sdang*
jealousy	*phrag dog*
pride	*nga rgyal*
ignorance	*gti mug*
five families, buddhas of the	*rigs lnga sangs rgyas*
five families/five enlightened families	*rigs lnga*
Lotus family	*pad ma'i rigs*
Vajra family	*rdo rje'i rigs*
Transcendent family	*de bzhin gshegs pa'i rigs*
Jewel family	*rin po che'i rigs*
Action family	*las kyi rigs*
five paths	*lam lnga*
path of accumulation	*tshogs lam*
path of preparation	*sbyor lam*
path of seeing	*mthong lam*
path of meditation	*sgom lam*
path of no more learning	*mi slob lam*
five perfect conditions/certainties	*phun sum tshogs pa lnga/nges pa lnga*
teaching	*chos*
time	*dus*
teacher	*ston pa*
place	*gnas*
retinue	*'khor*
five pure aggregates	*rnam dag phung po lnga*
five sense consciousnesses	*sgo lnga'i dbang shes*
five sensory objects of enjoyment	*yon tan lnga*
five texts translated earlier	*snga 'gyur lnga*
five wisdoms	*ye shes lnga*

discerning wisdom	*so sor rtogs pa'i ye shes*
mirror-like wisdom	*me long lta bu'i ye shes*
wisdom of the expanse of the true nature of reality	*chos dbyings ye shes*
wisdom of total sameness	*mnyam nyid ye shes*
wisdom that accomplishes activities	*bya grub ye shes*
four close applications of mindfulness:	*dran pa nye bar bzhag pa bzhi*
close application of mindfulness on the body	*lus dran pa nye bar bzhag pa*
close application of mindfulness on the mind	*sems dran pa nye bar bzhag pa*
close application of mindfulness on the feelings	*tshor ba dran pa nye bar bzhag pa*
close application of mindfulness on phenomena	*chos dran pa nye bar bzhag pa*
four yogas:	*rnal 'byor bzhi, ting nge 'dzin rnam pa bzhi*
contemplation of the calm state	*gnas pa'i ting nge 'dzin*
contemplation of the immovable state	*lhag mthong gi ting nge 'dzin*
contemplation of total sameness	*mnyam nyid kyi ting nge 'dzin*
contemplation of the self-perfection of wisdom	*lhun grub kyi ting nge 'dzin*
four joys	*dga' ba bzhi*
four lamps	*sgron ma bzhi*
lamp of the empty sphere	*thig le stong pa'i sgron ma*
the lamp of the expanse of pure awareness	*rig pa dbyings kyi sgron ma*
the lamp of self-originated knowledge	*shes rab rang byung gi sgron ma*
far-sighted water lamp	*rgyang zhags chu'i sgron ma*
four types of birth (birth from womb, egg, heat, moisture, and miraculous birth)	*skye ba rnam pa bzhi*
Garab Dorje	*dga' rab rdo rje*
gate of complete liberation	*rnam par thar pa'i sgo*
Ghanavyūha	*stug po bkod pa*
Glorious Jewel	*rin chen dpal*
Gö Lotsava	*'gos lo tsa ba*
great enjoyment	*longs spyod chen po*
great eternity	*rtag pa chen po*
great gathering of the wheel of letters	*yi ge 'khor lo tshogs chen*
Great Glorious One	*dpal chen po*
great manifestation of wisdom	*ye shes kyi snang ba chen po*

great secret	*gsang ba chen po*
great sphere/total sphere	*thig le chen po*
Great Symbol (Skt. *mahāmudrā*)	*phyag rgya chen po*
great transcendence	*'das pa chen po*
great transcendence of suffering	*mya ngan las 'das pa chen po*
Great Vairocana	*rnam par snang mdzad chen po*
greatness	*che ba*
ground of all	*kun gzhi*
Guhyasamāja Tantra	*gsang ba 'dus pa'i rgyud*
Guru Chöwang	*gu ru chos dbang*
Gyalse Thugchog Tsal	*rgyal sras thugs mchog rtsal*
Gyalwe Chin	*rgyal bas byin*
habitual tendencies/traces of past actions	*bag chags*
hand implement	*phyag mtshan*
Heart Essence	*snying thig*
heart/essence	*snying po/tsit ta*
Heaven of the Thirty-Three Gods (Skt. *trayastriṃśa*)	*sum cu rtsa gsum*
hell	*dmyal ba*
heruka, blood-drinker	*he ru ka, khrag 'thung*
Hevajra	*dgyes pa rdo rje*
Hinayana	*theg pa sman pa*
History of the Teaching: Feast of the Wise	*chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*
hope	*re ba*
identical	*don gcig*
identical throughout the three times	*dus gsum gcig*
ignorance	*ma rig pa/gti mug*
illusory	*sgyu ma lta bu*
immaculate	*dri ma med pa*
immense space	*klong yangs pa'i mkha'*
immutable expanse	*'gyur ba med pa'i dbyings*
impure vision	*ma dag pa'i sngang ba*
inalienable state	*mi 'phrog pa*
inclination	*mos pa*

inconceivable	*bsam gyis mi khyab pa*
indestructible	*mi shigs pa*
indestructible nature (Skt. *vajra*)	*rdo rje*
indestructible phenomena (Skt. *vajradharma)*	*rdo rje chos*
indestructible speech	*rdo rje smra ba*
indestructible way/Vajrayāna	*rdo rje theg pa*
indivisibility/inseparability	*dbyer med*
indivisible	*mi phyed pa*
inexhaustible treasury	*mthar mi zad pa'i mdzod/zad mi shes pa'i mdzod*
infinite	*mtha' yas*
Infinite Bliss	*bde ba rab 'byams*
influenced by corrupt words	*bslad pa'i tshig gis 'chal ba*
initiation	*dbang*
innate	*lhan skyes*
innate joy (Skt. *sahajānanda*)	*lhan skyes dga' ba*
instantly perfected	*gcig char rdzogs*
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo	*'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po*
jealousy	*phrag dog*
Jewel family/Ratna family	*rin po che'i rigs*
jewel of the three worlds	*khams gsum rin chen*
Jñānagarbha	*ye shes snying po*
Jñānapāda	*ye shes zhabs*
jñānasattva/wisdom deity	*ye shes kyi lha*
joy	*dga' ba*
Kālacakra	*dus 'khor*
Karma Lingpa	*kar ma gling pa*
karmamudrā	*las kyi phyag rgya*
Kawa Paltseg	*ska ba dpal brtsegs*
kāya of merit	*bsod nams sku*
kāya of spontaneously arisen wisdom	*ye shes kyi sku*
kāya of the expanse of the true nature of reality of the Sugata	*bde gshegs chos dbyings sku*
kāya of the very nature of wisdom	*ye shes chos nyid sku*

kāya that abides in the essence of enlightenment	*snying po byang chub na bzhugs pa'i sku*
kāya that is the source of jewels	*rin chen 'byung ldan sku*
Kham system	*khams lugs*
King of Awareness	*rig pa'i rgyal po*
King of Nonconceptuality	*mi dmigs pa'i rgyal po*
King of the Crucial Teachings	*lung gi rgyal po*
knowledge (Skt. *prajñā*)	*mkhyen pa/shes rab*
Kongtrul Lodrö Taye, Jamgön	*'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas*
Kriyātantra	*bya ba'i rgyud*
kumbhāṇḍa	*grul bum*
lack of a final destination	*mthar thug med pa*
lack of inherent nature	*rang bzhin med pa*
Lalitavajra	*sgeg pa rdo rje*
lamp of the Mind	*thugs kyi sgron ma*
lapis lazuli (Skt. *vaidūrya*)	*bai du rya*
level beyond action	*bya ba med pa'i sa*
level of Buddha	*sangs rgyas sa*
level of realization (Skt. *bhūmi*)	*sa*
level of supreme greatness	*rab tu che ba'i sa*
level of supreme wisdom	*ye shes bla ma'i sa*
level of the great gathering of the wheel of letters	*yi ge 'khor lo tshogs chen gyi sa*
level of *vajra*-holder	*rdo rje 'dzin pa'i sa*
liberation	*nges 'byung/thar pa/sgrol ba*
liberation, full	*rnam par thar pa*
light	*'od*
Light for the Eyes of Contemplation	*bsam gtan mig sgron*
light of the Body	*sku'i 'od*
light of wisdom	*ye shes kyi 'od*
limitless	*mu med pa*
limpid	*dwangs*
literal meaning	*nges tshig*
little faith	*dad pa chung ba*
little learning	*thos pa nyung ba*

Lodrö Tenpa	*blo gros brtan pa*
Longchenpa/Longchen Rabjampa	*kLong chen rab ’byams pa*
Lotus family/Padma family	*pad ma’i rigs*
Lotus Heruka	*pad ma he ru ka*
low level of intelligence	*blo ’phang dma’ ba*
Lui Gyalpo Jogpo	*klu’i rgyal po ’jog po*
luminosity	*’od gsal*
lying	*rdzun du smra ba*
Mādhyamika	*dbu ma*
magical display	*cho ’phrul*
magnificence	*gzi brjid*
Mahākāla	*mgon po nag po*
Mahāmudrā	*phyag rgya chen po*
mahāsattva	*sems dpa’ chen po*
Mahayana	*theg pa chen po*
Mahāyoga	*rnal ’byor chen po*
major and minor marks	*mtshan dpe*
male bodhisattva	*sems dpa’/byang chub sems dpa’*
mamo	*ma mo*
mandala	*dkyil ’khor*
mandala manifestation of great power	*dbang chen rol pa’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of light	*’od kyi dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the actual and perfect enlightenment of Vairocana	*rnam par snang mdzad mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the Body	*sku’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the marvelous Body	*sku rmad du byung ba’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the marvelous Mind	*thugs rmad du byung ba’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the marvelous Voice	*gsung rmad du byung ba’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the Mind	*thugs kyi dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the mind	*yid kyi dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the perfect enlightenment of Ratnasambhava	*rin chen ’byung ldan mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala of the total perfection	*rdzogs pa chen po’i dkyil ’khor*

mandala of the Voice	*gsung gi dkyil ’khor*
mandala of wisdom	*ye shes dkyil ’khor*
mandala that is the source of compassionate energy	*thugs rje ’byung ba’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala that is victorious over the three worlds	*khams gsum rnam par rgyal ba’i dkyil ’khor*
mandala that tames living beings	*’gro ba ’dul ba’i dkyil ’khor*
mandalas of the clusters	*tshogs kyi dkyil ’khor*
mandalas that unify all secrets	*gsang ba thams cad ’dus pa’i dkyil ’khor*
manifestation	*rol pa*
Mañjuśrī	*’jam dpal/’jam dpal bzang po*
Mañjuśrīkīrti	*’jam dpal grags pa*
Mañjuśrīmitra	*’jam dpal bshes gnyen*
Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti	*’jam dpal mtshan brjod*
mantra/natural mantra	*sngags*
mantric adept	*sngags ’chang*
Marpa	*mar pa*
marvelous (Skt. *saubhāṣika/adbhuta*)	*rmad byung* i,iii,
marvelous mandala	*dkyil ’khor rmad du byung ba/rmad du byung ba’i dkyil ’khor*
marvelous mandala of total bliss	*bde ba chen po’i dkyil ’khor rmad du byung ba*
marvelous primordial state	*rmad byung byang chub sems*
marvelous secret	*gsang ba rmad du byung ba*
marvelous secret mandala	*gsang ba’i dkyil ’khor rmad du byung ba*
marvelous view	*lta ba rmad du byung ba*
master	*slob dpon*
materiality	*rdzas*
meaning/principle/real meaning	*don*
meditation	*sgom pa*
meditation on the primordial state	*byang chub sems bsgom pa*
Meditation on the Primordial State: Extracting Pure Gold from Ore	*byang chub sems sgom pa rdo la gser zhun*
meditational deity	*yi dam/yi dam lha*
mental activity	*yid la byed pa*
mental consciousness	*yid*

mental fabrication/concept	*spros pa*
merciless	*brtse ba med pa*
Meru, Mount	*ri rab*
meteoritic iron	*gnam lcags*
method (Skt. *upaya*)	*thabs s*
method of one's own body	*rang lus thabs*
method with the body of another	*gzhan lus thabs*
mind essence	*sems nyid*
Mind of the sky	*nam mkha'i thugs*
Mind Only (Skt. *cittamātra*, also known asYogacāra)	*sems tsam pa or rnal 'byor spyod pa*
Mind series	*sems sde*
mind that has no birth	*sems skye pa med pa*
Mind, great	*thugs chen po*
mind/mental consciousness	*yid* see below
mind/ordinary mind	*sems* v,
Mind/primordial Mind	*thugs*
miracle	*'phrul*
miraculous display	*rdzu 'prul*
mirror-like wisdom	*me long lta bu'i ye shes*
monastic code of discipline	*'dul ba*
mudra of supreme enlightenment	*byang chub mchog gi phyag rgya*
mudra that bestows power	*dbang sbyin pa'i phyag rgya*
mudra/symbolic gesture	*phyag rgya*
nāga	*klu*
Nāgarāja	*klu'i rgyal po*
Nāgārjuna	*klu sgrub*
Nālanda	*na len tra*
Narahasa	*na ra ha sa*
natural condition	*de bzhin nyid/ji bzhin pa*
natural liberation	*rang grol*
naturally present	*rang bzhin du gnas pa*
nature	*rang bzhin/khams*
nectar	*bdud rtsi*

nirmāṇakāya	*sprul sku*
nirvana/transcendence/transcendence of suffering	*mya ngan las ’das pa*
nonabiding	*mi gnas*
nonaction	*byar med*
nonattached	*chags med*
nonconceptuality/nonconceptual	*mi rtog pa*
nondual/nonduality	*gnyis su med pa*
not constructed	*bkod pa ma yin pa*
not lost	*chud mi za*
not related	*ma ltos*
not to beg from others	*gzhan la slong bar mi byed pa*
not transmigrating	*mi ’khor*
Nubchen Sangye Yeshe	*gnubs chen sangs rgyas ye shes*
nucleus	*snying po*
nucleus of clarity	*gsal ba’i snying po*
Nyag Jñānakumāra	*gnyag dza nya ku ma ra*
Nyang system	*nyang lugs*
Nyang Tingdzin Zangpo	*nyang ting ’dzin bzang po*
Nyang Yeshe Jungne	*nyang ye shes ’byung gnas* 13
Nyangben Rinchen Tsugtor	*nyang ban rin chen gtsug gtor*
Nyangral Nyima Özer	*nyang ral nyi ma ’od zer*
nyengyü	*snyan brgyud*
Nyingpo Drupa	*snying po grub pa*
obscuration/obstacle	*sgrib pa*
Oḍḍiyāna	*o rgyan*
offering	*mchod pa*
omnipresent bliss	*kun bde ba*
Omniscient One	*thams cad mkhyen pa*
one who has the body of wisdom	*ye shes lus can*
one’s awareness/one’s pure awareness	*rang rig pa/rang gi rig pa*
one’s own Body	*bdag nyid sku*
one’s self/oneself	*bdag nyid*
ordinary *siddhis*	*thun mong gi dngos grub*

ornament of the manifestation of wisdom	*ye shes rol pa'i rgyan*
Padmasambhava	*pad ma 'byung gnas*
pāramitā/means of transcendence	*pha rol tu phyin pa*
path embodied in the lack of intrinsic nature	*rang bzhin med pa'i lam*
path of greatness	*che ba'i lam*
path of liberation	*thar pa'i lam*
path of natural liberation	*rang grol lam*
path of seeing (*see* five paths)	
path of wisdom	*ye shes lam*
Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa	*dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba*
Pema Lingpa	*pad ma gling pa*
perception (*see* five aggregates)	*'du shes*
perfect hearer	*nyan pa phun sum tshogs pa*
Perfect Teacher	*ston pa phun sum tshogs pa*
perfect/total	*chub*
perfection of all phenomena	*chos kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*
permanence and cessation	*rtag chad*
pervades all	*kun la 'jug pa*
phase of completion/completion phase	*rdzogs rim*
phase of creation/creation phase	*bskyed rim*
phenomena of existence	*srid pa'i chos*
Pong Lotsava Lodro Tenpa	*dpong lo tsa va blo gros brtan pa*
power	*dbang phyug/mthu*
practice	*sgrub pa*
prajñāpāramitā/boundless knowledge/transcendent knowledge/transcendent wisdom	*shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*
prāṇāyāma	*srog rtsol*
pratyekabuddha	*rang sangs rgyas*
Pratyekabuddhayāna	*rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa*
Precious Guru	*guru rin po che*
precious mind	*sems rin po che*
precious Mind	*thugs rin po che*
presence	*dran pa*

preta	*yi dwags*
pride	*nga rgyal*
primordial enlightenment	*ye nas sangs rgyas pa*
primordial purity, primordial emptiness	*ka dag*
primordial state (Skt. *bodhicitta*)	*byang chub sems* i,iii,
primordial state of the true nature of reality	*chos nyid byang chub sems*
principle/meaning	*don*
Protector of the World	*'jig rten mgon po*
proud	*blo sbram*
provisional meaning	*bkri ba'i don*
Puṇḍarika	*pad ma dkar po*
pure	*byang ba*
pure and impure	*gtsang rme*
pure awareness/awareness	*rig pa*
pure essence	*dwangs ma*
pure from the beginning	*ye nas dag*
pure realm	*zhing*
pure vision	*dag pa'i sngang ba*
purified from the beginning	*ye nas byang ba*
purpose	*dgos ched*
pūtanā	*srul po*
qualities/benefits	*yon tan*
quality	*chos*
Queen of Desire	*'dod pa'i dbang mo*
Rabnang	*rab snang*
rākṣa/rākṣasa	*srin po*
Rangjung Dorje, third Karmapa	*rang byung rdo rje*
Ratnasambhava	*rin chen 'byung ldan*
rays	*zer*
rays of the Voice	*gsung gi 'od zer*
real meaning	*don nges pa/don*
reality	*chos*
realization	*rtogs pa/mngon rtogs*

realized	*’grub*
realm	*khams*
recitation of mantras	*’dzab*
result/final attainment/fruit	*’bras bu*
Rinchen Zangpo	*rin chen bzang po*
rolpa, *rolpa* energy, manifestation (inner form energy)	*rol pa*
Rolpai Dorje, fourth Karmapa	*rol pa’i rdo rje*
Rongpa Nubchungwa	*rong pa snubs chung ba*
sādhana/means of accomplishment	*sgrub thabs*
Sage of the World	*’jig rten mkhas pa*
Samantabhadra	*kun tu bzang po*
Samantabhadrī	*kun tu bzang mo*
samayamudrā	*dam tshig gsang ba’i phyag rgya*
sambhogakāya	*longs sku*
sameness	*mnyam pa nyid*
Saṃgha	*dge ’dun*
secret	*gsang ba*
secret empowerment	*gsang dbang*
secret essential condition	*gsang ba de kho na nyid*
secret expanse	*gsang ba’i dbyings*
Secret Instruction series	*man ngag sde*
secret lamp of the Mind	*thugs gsang ba’i sgron ma*
secret mandala of the Mind	*thugs gsang ba’i dkyil ’khor*
secret mandala of wisdom	*ye shes gsang ba’i dkyil ’khor*
Secret Mantra	*gsang sngags*
secret marvelous mandala	*gsang ba’i dkyil ’khor rmad du byung ba*
secret tantra	*gsang ba’i rgyud*
section/chapter	*le’u*
self	*bdag nyid*
self-originated wisdom	*rang byung ye shes*
self-originated, supreme mudra	*rang byung mchog gi phyag rgya*
self-perfected/self-perfection	*lhun grub/lhun gyis grub pa*
semen, seminal essence	*khu ba*

semiprecious stones	*’ching bu/mching bu*
service to the deity	*bsnyen pa*
setting of the teaching	*chos kyi gleng gzhi*
settling in the natural state	*rnal du phab pa*
seven branches of enlightenment	*byang chub yan lag bdun*
perfect presence	*yang dag pa’i dran pa*
perfect discrimination	*yang dag pa’i chos rab tu rnam par ’byed pa*
perfect effort	*yang dag pa’i brtson ’grus*
perfect joy	*yang dag pa’i dga’ ba*
perfect suppleness	*yang dag pa’i shin sbyangs*
perfect meditative stability	*yang dag pa’i ting nge ’dzin*
perfect equanimity	*yang dag pa’i btang snyoms*
sexual misconduct	*mi tshangs spyod pa*
Shakyamuni	*sha kya thub pa*
Shangpa Kagyü	*shangs pa bka’ brgyud*
Shong Lotsava Lodrö Tenpa	*shong lo tsa ba blo gros brtan pa*
Siddha	*grub thob*
single spiritual way	*theg pa gcig*
six means of transcendence, six *pāramitās* (first ten of ten *pāramitās*; *see* ten means of transcendence)	*phar phyin drug*
skillful means/method	*thabs*
sky of wisdom	*ye shes mkha’*
sky/space	*nam mkha’*
Sopashika (Skt. *saubhāṣika*/*adbhuta*)	*rmad byung*
source	*’byung gnas*
space of the consorts of the buddhas	*rgyal ba yum gyi mkha’*
space/sky	*nam mkha’*
sphere	*thig le*
sphere of the true nature of reality	*chos nyid kyi thig le*
spontaneously arisen	*rang byung*
spontaneously arisen mandala of the true nature of reality	*chos nyid dkyil ’khor rang ’byung*
spontaneously arisen, supreme mandala	*rang byung mchog gi dkyil ’khor*
spontaneously perfect	*lhun gyis rdzogs pa*

spontaneously present	*lhun gyis gnas pa*
Śraddhākaravarman	*dag byed go cha*
śrāvaka	*nyan thos*
Śrāvakayāna	*nyan thos kyi theg pa*
Śrī Siṃha	*shri sing ha*
state of realization	*dgongs pa*
steal	*ma byin len*
strength	*stobs*
subject and object	*gzung ’dzin*
Sugata	*bde bar gshegs pa*
supreme letter	*yi ge dam pa*
supreme level of Samantabhadra	*kun tu bzang po mchog gi sa*
supreme secret	*gsang ba dam pa*
supreme *siddhi*	*mchog gi dngos grub*
sutra	*mdo*
symbolic gesture/symbol/mudra	*phyag rgya*
tantra	*rgyud*
Tantra of the All-Surpassing Sound	*sgra thal ’gyur chen po’i rgyud*
Tantra of the Marvelous Primordial State	*byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba’i rgyud*
Tantrayana	*rgyud theg pa*
Tāranātha	*ta ra na tha*
Tathāgata/Transcendent One	*de bzhin gshegs pa*
Teacher	*ston pa*
teaching/spiritual teaching/Dharma	*chos*
ten fields	*zhing bcu*
ten levels	*sa bcu*
ten means of transcendence/*pāramitās*	*phar phyin bcu*
generosity	*sbyin pa*
ethics	*thsul khrims*
patience	*bzod pa*
diligence	*brtson ’grus*
concentration	*bsam gtan*
knowledge	*shes rab*

method	*thabs*
strength	*stobs*
aspiration	*smon lam*
wisdom	*ye shes*
ten topics	*dngos po bcu*
terma	*gter ma*
tertön	*gter ston*
The [Jewel-]Encrusted Ornament of Bliss	*bde ba phra bkod*
The Cuckoo of Pure Awareness	*bkra shis pa'i dpal rig pa'i khu byug*
The Essence of the Primordial State	*byang chub sems thig*
the extremes of permanence and cessation	*rtag chad kyi mtha'*
The Flight of the Garuḍa	*byang chub kyi sems khyung chen lding ba*
The Great Potency	*rtsal chen sprugs pa*
The King of Space	*nam mkha'i rgyal po*
The Marvelous Primordial State	*byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba*
The Marvelous Primordial State Tantra	*byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i rgyud*
The Marvelous Primordial State, Total Bliss	*bde ba chen po byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba*
The Marvelous Total Estence	*chos chen po rmad du byung ba*
The Net of the Magical Manifestation of Mañjuśrī	*'jam dpal sgyu 'phrul dra ba*
The Primordial State in Which Everything is Unified	*byang chub kyi sems kun 'dus*
The Realization of the True Meaning of Meditation	*sgom pa don grub*
The Section of the Marvelous Primordial State, Total Bliss	*bde ba chen po byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i le'u*
The S Spheres of the Primordial State	*byang chub kyi sems thig le drug pa*
The Supreme Lord	*rje btsun dam pa*
The Supreme Peak	*rtse mo byung rgyal*
The Ten Concluding Teachings	*mdo bcu*
The Unwaning Standard of Victory: The Total Space of Vajrasattva	*mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa nam mkha' che*
The Wheel of Life	*srog gi 'khor lo*
The Wish-Fulfilling Precious Jewel	*yid bzhin nor bu*
thing	*dngos po*
thirteen texts translated later	*phyi 'gyur bcu gsum*

three dimensions	*dbyings gsum*
three existences	*srid pa gsum*
three *kāyas*	*sku gsum*
Three Phrases That Strike the Essence/Testament of Garab Dorje	*tshig gsum gnad brdegs*
three poisons	*dug gsum*
three spheres of existence	*khams gsum*
three times	*dus gsum*
three vehicles	*theg pa gsum*
three worlds	*khams gsum*
Togden Rinpoche	*rtogs ldan rin po che*
total	*chub. chen po*
total bliss	*bde ba chen po*
total delight	*dgyes pa chen po*
total emptiness	*stong pa chen po*
Total Perfection/Dzogchen	*rdzogs pa chen po/rdzogs chen*
total pervasiveness	*khyab brdal chen po*
total reality	*chos chen po*
total relaxation	*khregs chod*
total sameness	*mnyam nyid*
total self	*bdag nyid chen po*
total vision of wisdom	*ye shes kyi snang ba chen po*
totally pure	*rnam par dag pa*
traces of past actions/habitual tendencies	*bag chags*
training	*bslab pa*
transcendence of action and seeking	*bya btsal las 'das pa*
transcendence/transcendence of suffering (Skt. *nirvana)*	*mya ngan las 'das pa*
Transcendent family	*de bzhin gshegs pa'i rigs*
transcendent knowledge (Skt. *prajñāpāramitā)*	*shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*
Transcendent One/Tathāgata	*de bzhin gshegs pa*
transcendent wisdom	*ye shes kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*
transcends the domain of words and letters	*tshig dang yi ge spyod yul las 'das pa*
transmission	*brgyud*

mental	*dgongs brgyud*
orally transmitted instructions/oral transmission	*snyan brgyud*
symbolic transmission	*brda brgyud*
Transmitted Precepts of the Old Tradition	*rnying ma bka' ma*
Tashigangpa	*bkra shis sgang pa*
Trisong Detsen	*khri srong lde btsan*
Trom Yeshe Nyingpo	*'brom ye shes snying po*
true nature of reality	*chos nyid*
tsal, *tsal* energy (outer form energy)	*rtsal*
Tsamtrag	*mtshams brag*
Tsawa Rong	*tsha ba rong*
twenty-five marvelous commitments	*rmad du byung ba'i dam tshig nyi shu rtsa lnga*
two accumulations	*tshogs gnyis*
two hundred seventy Mount Merus	*rib rab sum cu phrag dgu*
two purities	*dag pa gnyis*
Ubhayatantra	*gnyis ka'i rgyud*
ultimate meaning	*nges don*
unaltered	*ma bslad pa*
unborn	*ma skyes*
unborn and unceasing condition of reality	*chos skye 'gag med pa*
unborn essence of the mind	*sems nyid ma skyes pa*
unchanging	*mi 'gyur*
uncompounded essence	*'dus ma byas pa'i snying po*
uncontaminated	*zag pa med*
uncontrived	*ma bcos*
uncreated	*ma byas*
understanding/understand	*rtogs pa/thugs su chud*
uninterrupted	*ma 'gag pa*
union	*sbyor ba*
universal path	*yongs gi lam*
universe of a billion world systems	*stong gsum gyi stong chen po jig rten gyi khams*

universe of a thousand world systems	*stong spyi phud*
unmodified	*ma bcos pa/bcos su med*
unmoving	*mi ’pho*
unrelated to circumstance	*rkyen dang ma ’brel*
unstained by defects	*skyon gyis ma gos*
unsurpassable vehicle	*bla med theg pa*
Upadeśa	*man ngag sde*
utterly pure expanse	*nam par dag pa’i dbyings*
Vairo Drabag	*bai ro ’dra bag*
Vairocana [the buddha]	*rnam par snang mdzad*
Vairocana [the translator]	*bai ro tsa na/rnam par snang mdzad*
Vairocana the Omni-Faced One	*rnam par snang mdzad kun tu zhal*
vajra body	*rdo rje lus*
Vajra family	*rdo rje’i rigs*
vajra/indestructible nature	*rdo rje*
Vajragarbha	*rdo rje snying po*
Vajrapāṇi	*phyag na rdo rje*
Vajrāsana	*rdo rje gdan*
Vajrasattva	*rdo rje sems dpa’*
Vajrayāna	*rdo rje theg pa*
Varanasi	*ba ra na si*
vast expanse	*klong*
Vast Space series	*klong sde*
vastness	*klong yangs/yangs pa*
vastness of total bliss	*bde ba chen po’i klong*
Vedas	*rig byed*
vehicle	*theg pa*
vehicle of the means of transcendence (*pāramitāyāna*)	*phar phyin theg pa*
very essence/ultimate essence	*ngo bo nyid*
view	*lta ba*
view of nonduality	*gnyis su me par lta ba*
view of the great sphere	*thig le chen po’i lta ba*
view of total bliss	*bde ba chen por lta ba*

Vimalamitra	*bi ma la mi tra*
violation	*nyams pa*
vision	*snang ba*
vital essence	*thig le*
Voice	*gsung*
Voice of the sky	*nam mkha'i gsung*
volition	*'du byed*
vow	*sdom pa*
Wangchug Gyatso	*dbang phyug rgya mtsho*
weak self-confidence	*spobs zhan*
wheel of phenomena of cyclic existence	*'khor ba'i chos kyi 'khor lo*
wisdom	*ye shes*
wisdom deity/*jñānasattva*	*ye shes kyi lha*
wisdom of one's awareness	*rang gi rig pa'i ye shes*
wisdom of pure awareness	*rig pa'i ye shes*
wisdom of realization	*rtogs pa'i ye shes*
wisdom of the expanse of the true nature of reality	*chos dbyings ye shes*
wisdom of the Omniscient Ones	*thams cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes*
wisdom of the primordial state	*byang chub sems kyi ye shes*
wisdom of total bliss	*bde ba chen po'i ye shes*
wisdom of total emptiness	*stong pa chen po'i ye shes*
wisdom of total sameness	*mnyam nyid ye shes*
wisdom that accomplishes the activities [of the Action family]	*bya grub ye shes*
Wise Wrathful King	*drang srong khros pa'i rgyal po*
wish-fulfilling precious gem/jewel	*yid bzhin gyi norbu rin po che/yid bzhin rin chen*
wish-fulfilling tree	*dpag bsam ljon shing*
without any spatial limitations	*phyogs cha med pa*
without attachment	*chags pa med*
without birth	*skye ba med pa*
without compassion	*snying rje med pa*
without fear	*'jigs pa med pa*
without obstruction	*'gog pa med pa*

womb of the mother	*yum kyi lhums*
world and the inhabitants	*snod bcud*
world system	*’jig rten gyi khams*
wrathful deity	*khro bo’i lha*
yakṣa	*gnod sbyin*
yakṣinī	*gnod sbyin mo*
yakṣinī Bodhi	*gnod sbyin mo chang chub*
Yama	*gshin rje*
Yeshe Ö	*ye shes ’od*
Yeshe Senge	*ye shes seng ge*
yoga	*rnal ’byor*
Yogacāra	*rnal ’byor spyod pa*
Yogatantra	*rnal ’byor rgyud*
yogin	*rnal ’byor pa*
yogin of the three times	*dus gsum rnal ’byor*
yogini	*rnal ’byor ma*
Youth of Sublime Light	*khye’u snang ba dam pa*
Yudra Nyingpo	*g.yu sgra snying po*
Yungtön Dorje Pal	*g.yung ston rdo rje dpal*

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